

SECTION V

LETTERS AND PAPERS, 1802-1804

SETTLEMENT WITH VINCENNES DEBTORS

Moy¹ 12 Jan^y 1802

Dear Sir, In reply to the letter I had the pleasure to receive from you yesterday I acquaint you that Monsieur Vigo's Debts to you have been satisfied by his own Promissory Note for Eight Hundred and thirty eight Dollars and 62½ cts. payable with In^t from 24 August last to you in Detroit in May next; and by the Note of Toussaints DuBois for One thousand Doll^{rs} with In^t from same date payable to you in Detroit in May 1803. That on account of Adhemar's debts to you I have received in full of his claims on the Estate of Bosseron, Toussaints DuBois Notes for One thousand Ninety three Dollars and 35 c^{ts} payable to you in May next at Detroit which several Notes are in my possession for you. Of your and the Miamis C^{os} claim on the Estate of Paul Gamelin I wish I could say as much, but no more than 40 Dollars have as yet come to my Hands, which were applied to Costs as you shall find when I render my Gen^l Acco^{ts}. It is true I have Governor Harrison's Note for 500 D^{rs} payable next Sep^{tr} for a tract of land of that Estate I bo't in at vendue at 450 and sold to him just as I was coming away for the above sum, and that he owes me 40 Dollars for [an] acre of land he bo't, to be paid at same time. The rest of the Lands the Widow offered to you were bo't in by me for want of bidders, and will not be converted untill I return, when I presume I shall receive Instructions, to dispose of them for your advantage, the Tract in the County of Wayne exep^ted, to sell which I daily expect a transcript of the Records of Knox, and have with me the original grant to Paul Gamelin, to be delivered over to whomsoever shall become the purchaser. Nothing has been received from the Papers she delivered over to me. In a few instances I have obtained obligations in your name instead of the late P. G. from poor People who owed.

¹ Moy was the home of Angus McIntosh in modern Windsor. See *B. H. R.*, I, 293-94.

Etienne S^{te} marie had sold you a tract of land, of which I found the Deed among your Papers. A Special Power of Attorney from you will be necessary to enable me to convert this property.

M^r Sparkman² has promised my brother a Bill on Montreal which he says you may have, of which you shall be fully informed in a few days. He and M^{rs} M^oIntosh join me in our best respects to you and M^{rs} Askin and your family, in which none can be more Sincere than Dear Sir

Your mo obed^t Serv^t

Will M^oIntosh

John Askin Esquire Detroit

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Detroit

Endorsed: Moy Jan^y 12th 1802 W^m Mackintosh Esq^{re} to
Jn^o Askin Contents Ent^d Jan^y 15th 1802

CONDITIONS AT ST. JOSEPH

St Josephs 9th Feb^y 1802

Dear Sir. I take this opurtunity of telling you we are all in good health and to Say it will give us Most Sincere pleasure to hear The Same from you The Indians that now go down will return and we hope will bring us news of a removal I assure you we are heartily Sick of this place Our Situation at Kingston was So very different. that we feel the drearyness (and idleness on my part) much more Severely. however we cant complain of being badly off either in point of lodgings or with respect to provitions. I believe we have now in the house 20 ham a dosen Part-ridges [illegible] fish, all of them got for a little Rum and Bread. You will Readily believe that Madlaine and My self are extremely Anxious to hear of little John We trust him in good health and a good Boy. We are perfectly convinced That he is in good hands—M^r Cowell sends down these Indians in Consequence of a Fire which burnt down his Kitchen and the Bakehouse and also having Suspended M^r T. Duggan³ from his place as Storekeeper. 'till the

² For sketch of the career of John Sparkman see *ibid.*, 308.

³ For sketch of the career of Thomas Duggan, see *ibid.*, I, 286.

Generals pleasure is known. he has given himself up almost entirely to the drinking of Grog and I think will Scarcly see The Winter out but The immediate Cause of his Suspension was complaints Made by different Indians of has taking their provitions from them after getting it out of The Store. As I have repeatedly heard our Brother John Say he wished much Duggans Appointment I wrote him last fall Saying he ought to lose no time in applying if he still wished it. you can let him know what has taken place and he can then do as he thinks proper. I hope you will find it convenient to Send the things I mention'd in the fall by the first oportunity. Should it be a Merchant vessel, Col. Smith I have no doubt will arrange The Freight So that it may be Return'd. I believe I [torn] Some plan. here is also a Small memorandum at the bottom.

Madlain joins me in best wishes for you and the whole family and I am Dear Sir

Most Truly yours

R. Richardson⁴

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit

Endorsed: S^t Josephs Feb^r 9th 1802 Doc^r Richardson to Jn^o Askin Recv^d 10^h March Answ^d the 13th

RECOMMENDATION FOR OFFICE OF SHERIFF⁵

Detroit February the 23^d 1802

My Dear Sir Always troubling you for myself or some others. M^r Pollard is gone to Quebec in order to obtain Holy orders if he can. I hope poor man he may succeed for in my oppinion he is twenty times fitter for a clergyman than a Sheriff. this leaves an opening for the latter place. M^r Hands of Sandwich who you have known well wishes to get that place & the first characters here mean to Memorial his excellency the Lieutenant Governor in his behalf as soon as he comes to York, but least there might be an application before that time will you be obliging as to mention M^r Hands his name and intention to Governor in so doing you will serve a poor but worthy man well calculated to fill that

⁴ In the manuscript a memorandum of goods desired follows at this point.

⁵ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

office these reasons alone if they even came to you thro a stranger I'm sure would influence you in his behalf, & I believe you are convinced that for my nearest relation I would not request of you to get an unworthy or unfit person into office (If I thought them such) so as to cause any reflection to your recommendation.

As this is a chance opportunity and the letter may not get down I shall write no other by this opportunity. nothing new, since I wrote you & my good Friend M^r James M^cGill by the express. My Family thank God are in good health. My daughter Alice married to M^r Brush—a lawyer who has a good deal of practice and well liked.⁶ Detroit is now a corporation⁷ the limits of which extends from the line between M^r Beaubien & me to the line between the late W^m Macomb & Chene. this it is thought will raise the value of the property within these boundaries I'm by a law of this territory tho' a British Subject named the first of five trustees to make laws for the corporation & put them in force. I mean to move over to the other side in may next and am in hopes of selling my present place of residence on this side. There is some people who have applied to know what you would [sell] some of the lots you and M^r M^cGill got of me for on the British Side. The value of some will be much greater than others of which from information I'm a tolerable good Judge, however untill you get a list of the whole from me I suppose you [will wish to] leave them as they are. Land in my oppinion cannot fall in Value.

I remain My dear Friend Gratefully Yours
Isaac Todd Esquire Merch^t Montreal

SALE OF THE SAGUINAH

Detroit Feb^y 23^d 1802

Mess^{rs} George Meldrum & William Park

Dear sirs Our scatered situations making it now incon-

⁶ For the careers of Elijah Brush and Adelaide (Alice) Askin, see *B. H. R.*, I, 15, 207. The date of Brush's death as there given is incorrect. In a letter to Solomon Sibley, Dec. 6, 1813, John Anderson reports his serious illness; while Benjamin Chittenden, in a letter to Sibley of Dec. 31, states that Brush died after an illness of about two weeks. Mss. in B. H. Coll.

⁷ Detroit was incorporated by act of the General Assembly of the Northwest Territory, Jan. 18, 1802. For an excellent account of the conditions resulting in this development, see Burton's Introduction to *Journal of the Board of Trustees*.

venient to hold a joint share in the *Saguinah* & Exposing her to Public Sale at this time in my Oppinion would Answer no good End I therefore have to Propose that if you will set a price on her & give me the offer of buying it or not I will make an Allowing of £50 for such cho[i]ce. that is to say if I prefer the payment to my share in the Vessell £50 will be taken from her Valuation, or if I prefer the Vessell I will give £50 more for her. The payment by those who get her as follows £100 N Y C on the 1st of Jan^y next, the remainder due in two Equal shares on the 1st of Jan^y 1804 & 1805 no Interest to be required Except from the day Each Sum is due & the purchaser to give his notes payable to order for the Sums. The Balast & Vessell Boat go with the Vessell & Every other thing belonging to her

I am Dear Sirs Your most obedient Humble servant

(Signed) J. A.

Endorsed: Detroit Feb^y 23^d 1802 John Askin Senior to Mess^{rs} George Meldrum & W^m Park (Copy)

COMMISSION TO HIRE SHOEMAKERS

Detroit Feb^y the 27th 1802

Dear Henry Having wrote you some time ago I have nothing now to add relative to my Family which thank God are all well except that my only daughter except one that was unmarried has taken a husband unto herself a few days ago he promisses fair, has a good character and [is] reckoned a good lawyer which is not a bad profession in this quarter

The principal intent of this is to request you will hire for me two canadians good shoemakers single men of good characters & not to exceed 600th wages for one year, to commence from their arrival here they shall be well used and fairly paid at the expiration of their times if you can find such please advance the equipments and not more than a half Johannes to [each] in money & I will send you a draught for both. you will please send them up early in some persons boatt so that the expence of their voyage may not cost much or perhaps which would be better, you could get them in as middle men & I receive something for their services I address myself to you to hire these men as I

think you are better acquainted than most people with the tradesmen in and near Montreal. Its of great consiquence to me to get these people as I expect to have an interest in a tannery but I would not give higher wages than the 600ⁿ each.

I have only to add tha[t] me & mine wish you and yours health & happiness

Adieu Dear Henry yours

Alex^r Henry Esquire Merchant Montreal

Endorsed: [first line illegible] John Askin Senior to Alexander Henry (Copy)

AFFAIRS IN DETROIT

Detroit April 8th 1802

Dear Sir I was favoured with your two letters bearing date 8th Feb^y and 19th March past the former covering an account current and the latter summons's declarations Coppies &^{ca}. I have only as yet lookt slightly over the account however believe [it] to be right. I wish M^r Nichols could get land from Norton^s to discharge it or at least a part. The summons and declarations or copies rather have been properly served on Mess^{rs} John & James M^cGregor and I now inclose you the original with the proof of service. I beg you will not appologize for asking me to do any thing in my power for you here. Im much indebted to you on that score. I'm sorry to observe that M^r John M^cGregors⁹ mode of conduct I fear never will make him Friends. you are most asuredly justifiable in suing any man that would treat you as it appears he has. I have not employed M^r Woods¹⁰ as he is retained annually for the Mess^{rs} M^cGregors indeed there was no occasion yet I'm sure he wishes to serve you.

8 John Norton, for whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 457.

9 For the career of John McGregor, see *ibid.*, 369-70.

10 James Woods, the son of a Scotch merchant of St. John's, Lower Canada., was born in 1778. He studied law in Montreal and about the year 1800 came west to Sandwich, where he died on June 18, 1828. In Sandwich he achieved local prominence and prosperity and his activities as attorney caused him to figure frequently in the documents of the period. He was a friend and professional colleague of Solomon Sibley of Detroit, and much of their correspondence is preserved in the B. H. Coll. He was an ensign in the Essex County militia in 1804 and a captain in 1812, but no record of actual service in the war has been

I'm very happy to learn that the dear Children in every quarter are so well. when collected together it would afford me great happiness to see them. I wish you much joy and hope M^{rs} Hamilton is got well over the job. they are dangerous tho from being common [are] thought little of. Poor Women what do they not suffer in this life. I'm sorry on both your acc^t and mine that I took so much pains and trouble to spoil my cider. its probable that *too much cookery spoils the broth* if I find any of my cider sweet and good in May perhaps I may send you some.

Part of my stock are sent over the River and in about two weeks we will move after them. however in justice to the Gentlemen on this side I must say I have received nothing but politeness and civility from them above these two years past & I assure you debts are recovered here without delay which is a great Object for a Merchant. Now [I am] on this subject I wish to mention that Poor Doctor Harffy our District Judge has been so unwell for these two sessions past that he could not attend & I'm very fearfull never will. I assure [you] I think it very injurious to a country to have but one district judge why not several as they get no salary. On this side there is seven or eight judges of the Court of Common Pleas by which means business goes on without any interruption. If you agree with me in oppinion I wish you would bring in a bill for that purpose. there should not be less than three district Judges in each district however if the old mode should be continued and we loose poor Harffy, I wish you mentioned to the Governor to be carefull of his choice of one in this quarter. would you think that if I was called on for my oppinion I would be at a loss who to recommend. some I find too haughty & Passionate others not so fair characters as I could wish, others ignorant and many would be too much interested in most cases that could come before them. there is less risk in a number than in one. Let me have M^r Cartwrights and your oppinion on this subject.

found. On June 12, 1804, he married Elizabeth, daughter of Commodore Grant, and to them were born four sons and three daughters. One son, Robert Stuart Woods, born, Oct. 21, 1819, was long prominent in western Ontario as attorney, judge, and citizen. Information adapted from documents in *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*; George M. Rose (ed.), *Cyclopaedia of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1886), 471-72; Robert S. Woods, *Harrison Hall* (Chatham, 1896), *passim*; mss. in B. H. Coll., especially among the Askin and Sibley papers; and St. John's Church Register.

This place in incorporated M^{rs} Macombs farm and mine are in the Town. The legislature honored me so far as to make me the first of five trustees who they named & to whom they gave great authority. A Market is established by us and a small market house built. M^r & M^{rs} Brush returns their compliments to M^{rs} Hamilton & you he bids fair to be an able Lawyer has considerable practice is sober and industrious therefore I believe Alice has made a good choice. The poor Commodore & his Family have been and still are much afflicted with sickness. he is very weak and low however I hope not in danger

M^{rs} Askin and my Family in general assures M^{rs} Hamilton you and yours of our most sincere best wish Adieu Dear Sir

Yours Most truly

Addressed: Robert Hamilton Esquire Merchant Queens-
ton

Endorsed: Detroit April 8th 1802 John Askin Senior to
Robert Hamilton Esquire (Copy)

NEWS FROM MONTREAL

Montreal 18 April 1802

My Dear Askin I received a few day ago your two letters from Detroit in January mentioning your wish to have a Shoemaker. I have made every inquiry in my power, and find there cannot be found such a man as understands his business under one dollar pr day and found. Shoemakers are the dearest article here. they charge at present on account of peace one shilling more than they ever did before. this goes by our friend Pollard who has been so fortunate as to procure the Gown, and may make a Tolerable Parson—anything for an Hones[t] livelyhood. Honor or shame from no condition Rise. act well your part there all the Honor lies—as a great poet says. what do you think I have turn'd Commission Merch^t Broker & Auctioneer and have a great deal of business. I wish I had done it seven years past it would have been better for us both. I have been Idle to[o] long, but now must work to make up lost time. good Deer Skins sold well in last sale it is suposed

all other furs will sell well this year but take care of the next, it was the first year after the War we speculated with Todd which I will remember a long time.

Muskratts & I think Martens will all go to the States. the price of this article, muskratts is 36 [illegible] if tolerable good. my sons are all abroad. there is only M^{rs} Henry, my daughter & my self keep House who has our Health at present, but we have had a sickly winter. however we now eat our allowance and peace will bring us Plenty. the two North west Parties make our [illegible] disagreeable. M^eKensey is Knighted for his discovery of the N West Sea and has come out—and setting off for the Grand Portage. if these bucks had less money they would not be so anxious as they are.

I request that you will inform Joseph Lambert his mother is dead, and that the Garden his father bought for him is not paid any part, and that it costs his father much Labour to keep up the fences and pay the Tax, and says he is so old and infirm that he cannot longer work and has no money to lay out both of which I certify to be true. so that if Joseph does not send money to his father, he must send a renunciation or quit claim so that it may be sold. otherwise it will go to distruction and not be worth half what it cost and then all his father hath must be sold to pay the dificiency this you will inform him off and let me know, as the old man has for many years been my partner and is very poor. I remain my dear old friend ever your most affectionate one, with my famelys best wishes for yours.

ever yours sencerely

Alex^r Henry

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit Favoured by M^r Shepherd.

Endorsed: Montreal April 18th 1802 Alexd^r Henry to Jn^o Askin Rec^d ye 20th June Answ^d Aug^t 5th

DEATH OF WILLIAM HARFFY¹¹

Amherstburg 18th April 1802

Dear Sir I received your letters of good friday & of

¹¹ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

yesterday and observe the contents of them. if I had seposed the Coffin had been so long amaking I should have come up to have consulted with you or to have taken your derections. all we have to do now in my opinion is to have our late worthy friend Bueried in a decent Christian Like Manner which is comenced by having the colours of the Garrison and Vessels hoisted half mast up. the Paul berars will be the officers of the Garrison and Colonel Caldwell, the chief Mourner will be his Nephew. The Funeral will Proceed from His Howse at half after five this Evening. Not one word respecting his funeral is mentioned in his will, a Copy of which will be Sent you with all convenient Speed. I shall attend to what you Say respecting the effects being taken care of. all the Papers are Sealed up and also the Room in which they are

Monday 19th April 1802 We last evening performed the last office to our worthy deceased friend the Funeral was attended by every one in the Place. the Paul berars were Colonel Smith,¹² M^r Reynolds, M^r Macintosh Cap^t Fleming¹³ M^r Burns¹⁴ & M^r Sinclear¹⁵ M^r M^cGill read the

¹² Samuel Smith was born in Hempstead, Long Island, Dec. 27, 1756. He was commissioned ensign in the Queen's Rangers in 1776 and captain in 1780. At the close of the war he settled in New Brunswick, removing to Upper Canada after Simcoe, his old commander, became lieutenant-governor. He was appointed captain in the Queen's Rangers on Dec. 20, 1791, and was promoted lieutenant colonel in 1801. The duration of his service at Amherstburg was comparatively brief, since Captain McLean was in command as late as the early summer of 1801, and the Rangers were disbanded in 1802. He became a member of the Executive Council of Upper Canada in October, 1815, and subsequently twice served as administrator of the province. In later life he lived in Toronto, where he died, Oct. 20, 1826. On Oct. 22, 1799, he married Jane Isabella Clark of Kingston and two sons and six daughters were born to them. One daughter was born in Amherstburg, June 23, 1802. Data adapted from Wallace, *op. cit.*; *Simcoe Papers*, I, 72; Young, *Parish Register of Kingston*, 101-102; and St. John's Church Register.

¹³ Apparently William Fleming, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 383. He was long a member of the British naval establishment on the upper lakes; in 1793 he commanded the *Felicity*, and in 1794 the *Dunmore*. See *Simcoe Papers*, *passim*. In November, 1798, Captain Hector McLean at Amherstburg reported that he had assigned a lot of ground to Fleming, who had a large family, and "no place for them." *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXIII, 258. One William Fleming, presumably the same man, was a sailing master in the provincial marine during the War of 1812. Irving, *op. cit.*, 204.

¹⁴ Apparently Alexander Burns, who became paymaster of the Queen's Rangers, May 17, 1799. See British army lists for year 1800. Letters from him to Solomon Sibley in October and November, 1801, disclose that he was then serving at Amherstburg. Mss. in B. H. Coll. On June 22, 1802, he stood godfather for a baptism. Entry in St. John's Church Register.

¹⁵ John Sutherland Sinclair was commissioned lieutenant in the Royal Artillery, Sept. 25, 1796, captain, March 12, 1803, and battalion major, June 4, 1814. He retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel, Nov. 14, 1826. He was serving in Canada as early as 1797 and was still here during the War of 1812. See British army lists, and Irving, *op. cit.* Entries

Service & Mr McQueen¹⁶ comanded the party that fired Doct^r Gamble¹⁷ also attended in his Place. He is Buried Next to M^{rs} McLean & with your approbation I think a Red Ceder Picketing would be the best which shall Be done when I hear from you which I wish May be soon. I should think the best way would be to let the Howse for the Present if It can be don and to have somthing done to the Garden at all events. his Nephew is here at Present and I shall recomend him to come to consult with you what he is to do if he could be serviceable in colecting any property that may be out you will I sepose employ Him. there is little Prospect of him getting any thing unless affairs are much better than I expect At the time the Chieff Justice was here last year the Howse was Mortgaged to Mr Gray for at least 170 pounds Hállifax and as the will was made before that I am afraid that the house will be obliged to be sold. in overhauling his Papers perhaps somthing may appear that May give us information. I shall wait your Instructions respecting every thing that is to be done in the matter. Mr Allan¹⁸ I should think will be a Proper person to take the Inve[n]tory of the effects as he was well acquainted with our late friend and as he is Nottary Public Mr Allen Informs me that the doct^r mentioned to him in his lifetime that he wished his Nephew to have all his wearing Apperal. the Man who Waited on him in his last Illness cannot be sufficiently Rewarded for his attention. Please write me your sentiments on the above and any thing that may Accrue [occur] to you as I am very lame in the Bussness.

My Best respects to M^{rs} Askine and all the rest of your

in the St. John's Church Register disclose that he married Mary Ann Allan Gamble on June 22, 1802, and that sons were born to the couple, Dec. 5, 1803, and Feb. 6, 1805.

¹⁶ Alexander McQueen became an ensign in the Queen's Rangers, Dec. 7, 1796. See British army list for year 1800. The St. John's Church Register records the birth, Nov. 15, 1801, of Mary Flora, daughter of Alexander and Grace McQueen, and of a son, William, born, March 3, 1803. In the Register the name is variously spelled McQueen, McGuin, and Maguire.

¹⁷ John Gamble became surgeon in the Queen's Rangers, July 6, 1796. On June 22, 1802, a daughter of John and Isabella Elizabeth Gamble, Jane Smith Gamble, was baptized at St. John's Church. On the same day occurred the marriage of Lieut. John S. Sinclair and Mary Ann Allan Gamble, apparently an older daughter of John and Isabella Gamble. On April 20, 1804, Surgeon James Geddes married Sarah Hannah Bois Gamble, presumably another daughter of John and Isabella. See St. John's Church Register.

¹⁸ Apparently James Allan, whose career is noted in *B. H. R.*, I, 307.

good famely and believe me to be with great respect Dear
Sir your most obliged Hble Serv^t

David Cowan

J. Asken Esqr Detroit

P. S. M^r Charles brings you a cobby of the will Perhaps
Not very exact but you will see By it the Intention and be
able to Judge Better of matters by it. D. Cowan

Endorsed: Amhurstburgh April 18 & 19^h Cap^t Cowen to
Jn^o Askin respecting the funeral of the late Doc^r Harffy

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit.

FAMILY NEWS FOR COMMODORE GRANT

Cote des Outawas June the 8th 1802

My Dear sir Under cover with this you have a Letter
from me relative to the Militia as perhavs you may think
it right to show it to the Governor is the reason I did not
mix any Other matter with with it. M^r Baby having said he
would sett off[f] for York several days ago & not yet gone is
the reason that you will receive several Letters from me at
the same time. I know of little now in this Quarter. on
the other side there is great changes among the Officers &^{ca}
which you are acquainted with. Johny Grant tells us that
Everything is in the best Order at Gross Point the Family
are all well & M^r M^cCormick¹⁹ gives great satisfaction Alex
comes on very well. I have sent word to let him come over
on Saturday next and take one good days play with our
Alex & Johny Askin who comes every Saturday in the after-
noon & return on monday morning I [was] surprised to hear
that our Friend Arthur keeps up such good Order & at the
same time is so fond [of] the Children. I hear Maria²⁰ is
quite afeard of him I thought nothing good [could] keep
her in Order & that poor Jean²¹ is at school also. Some of
your Ladies & our nelly have been constantly during the
court with Alice it ended yesterday & Robertson I hear
has gained one or two of the Gros Point Causes. One of

¹⁹ Arthur McCormick, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 376-77.

²⁰ Maria Julia Grant, born, April 4, 1796, and subsequently the wife of William Robison.

²¹ Jean Cameron Grant, for whom see *ante*, 247.

them against S^t Bernard²² who has troubled that place so much Ambrose by Agreement is to get the place that S^t Bernard built on if he lost the one give him in exchange. I think he is in a bad way however I suppose he will appeal. all with me are well & when warm I [am] so also but we have had very little of that yet. As John has a great deal of trouble and very little profit as Collector, for his whole time almost is spent in watching the smuglers, I was thinking that his being a Vendue Master would help him much and not interfere with his other matters to get the place I cant think will require much Interest as M^r Park was admitted. If that is the case will you have the Goodness with your other Friends to get him that office. I suppose the District is not [blank] to one I have only to add that we all most sincerely wish you health & Happiness and that

I am most sincerely My Dear Sir Yours
Commodore Grant

SALE OF THE *SAGUINAH*²³

Strabane July 6th 1802

George Meldrum & William Parke, Esquires

Dear Sirs Having Explained to you both seperately the reason why I'm to have an allowance of £50, N. Y. Cur. made me for leaving it at your choice to take the Sloop *Saguinah* or oblige me to take her at the Valuation I may mention & you having agreed to the same it only remains now to mention the Price & term of Payment. The price is £700 N. Y. Currency for the Vessel riging furniture & apparel with every thing belonging to her likewise the Ballast Boat and stage; The Payments to be in three Notes to Order payable in the Months of May 1803, 1804, & 1805 without Interest each Note for the Amount of the Third of the same to be paid. this business IM happy to say will now be finished as you according to our Verbal agreement will take or give. I am Dear sirs

your most Obedient Humble Servant

²² Joseph St. Bernard, for sketch of whose career see *ante*, 188.

²³ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

INDEBTEDNESS OF CAPTAIN JOHN WHISTLER

Near Sandwich August the 11th 1802

Sir It appears by a list of Debts delivered me by M^r John Anderson and that you were Indebted to him & C^o in the sum of £20 19 N. Y Currency in September 1799, since which you paid £6["] 8["] 0 as I'm necessitated to make payments in a few days I beg you will pay unto M^r Brush or my son Charles the remainder. the receipt of either will be a sufficient discharge for that debt at M^r Andersons particular request I have forebore making this demand last year or that before but realy now my necessities for Cash will not admit of longer indulgence from Sir

Y^r most Obedient very humble Servant

Cap^t Whistler at Detroit

Endorsed: near Sandwich August the 11th 1802 John Askin Sen^r to Captain Whistler Cobby

SALE OF THE SAGUINAH

Sandwich 17th August 1802

John Askin Esquire

Dear Sir It is Only Now that we have been able to Answer yours of the 6th Ult^o Regarding your price for the Sloop *Saguinan*: We therefore Agree to Accept of the Proposals Made therein: That is to say you shall have her, with every thing bellonging to her, at Your Valuation viz £700 N.Y. C^y & that you grant Us Notes as expressed in your Letter, for the Proportional Part we hold in Her. We are equally happy as you are in bringing this Business to a Conclusion. We are Dear Sir

Your very obed^t Serv^{ts}

William Park

George Meldrum

Addressed: John Askin Senior Esquire Straebane

Endorsed: Sandwich Aug^t 17th 1802 Sale of the *Saguinah* from Mess^{rs} Meldrum & Park Rec^d y^e 19th all sett^d

MORAVIAN MISSION ON HARSEN'S ISLAND²⁴

Dear Sir, Permit me to write a few [lines] to You, upon a subject, which is highly important to me & the whole of the Society to which I belong.

I conjecture, before this You have heard already that I am situated here at present at the River St. Clair & am determined to live with the Indians & to instruct them & acquaint them with their God & Creator, so as our Society has already done, among other Indian nations, as is well known to You. For this sole reason I have been sent out by our Society to these poor Gentiles.

Now of needs I must have a fixed place of settlement & in order to acquire this, the Indians, especially the two great chiefs Nangi & Whitanessa, (I suppose both known to you) have delivered the head of Harsens Island over to me & I have their Wampums, for a seated place for me, & those of them who would in time join; this piece of Land, is indeed well situated & fitted for such a purpose, where Indians could live more by themselves.

On delivery I scrupled, & told them, should it happen, that their ancesstors or any of them had given out this small tract already, now in this case They mutually & firmly promised, that they would then, replace or give to him who rightly owned it already, the same quantity of acres, above or before the Sanagokanink, or perhaps somewhere else.

Since this time now, I have received better information of M^r Grusbeck²⁵ who tells me that they have given it away, & that the deed thereof, is lodged in your hands—further that Sanagokanink is in the same deed.

As it is not consistent either with the general adopted character of our Society at large, or with either individual, & therefor likewise against me, to dispute, quarrel or wrangle with any person, I have taken the liberty to ask you about Your sentiments & opinions about the affair, & as You have it in hand, as the acting person, Your information will be of great consequence, & clear the whole matter at once. You will therefore greatly oblige me, to send me a few lines

²⁴ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

²⁵ William Groesbeck, for sketch of whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 306.

with the next opportunity (perhaps an Indian, that comes home) as I am very anxious to receive the due information.

If the matter is duly treated, with the mutual consent of either party, then amity & goodwill, will be the future conductor, but on the contrary, should it be slightly overrun, it could create in time hence, enmity, dispute, quarrel, highly disagreeable to me or the Society, who send me.

In case it should be possible that an exchange of land, should take place, I have surveyed the head of Harsens Island, upon request of the Indians & found it 110 Acres the greatest part of the land is poor, & but little timber or wood on it.

With sentiments of regard & esteem to M^{rs} Askin Yourself & family, I remain D^r Sir

Your sincere friend & humble Serv^t

Christⁿ Fred. Denkey

Harsens Island

Addressed: John Askin Sen^r Esq^r Sandwich.

Endorsed: Harsins Island Sep^r 20th 1802 The Reverend M^r Denkey to Jn^o Askin Rec^d 27th Answ^d Oct^r 15th

GREETINGS FROM COLONEL DE PEYSTER

Mavis Grove, near Dumfries 8 Oct^r 1802

My dear Askin The bearer of this M^r Clarke, son to an old acquaintance, and Brother to my worthy Friend Samuel Clarke of Dumfries, having this instant informed me that he sets off[f] for Gre[e]nnock tomorrow on his way to Niagara, affords me an oppertunity, though an hurried one, of assuring you and M^{rs} Askin and family of M^{rs} DePeyster and my unshaken regard and best wishes. M^r C. will inform you all about us, and tell you what a sober fellow I am growing, owing to the good guidance of one of the best of women. We beg you will remember us kindly to our Friend Grant and his good Lady. and to M^r Hamilton, with such other of our old acquaintances as you think will be glad to hear that we still retain a sense of the many obligations we were under to them during our peregrinations.

God bless you, and believe me to be with unalterable friendship.

Your obliged Humb Ser

A^t De Peyster

Addressed: Jn^o Askin Esq^r Detroit for^d M^r Clark

Endorsed: Forwarded from Queenston Feb^y 11^h 1803 by Your most obed^t Serv^t T. Clark

AFFRAY OF JOHN R. WILLIAMS

Queenstown Oct 15 1802

My Dear Sir I was duly favord with your letter of the 8th instant p^r Mons^r Campeau respecting the unfortunate & very unhappy M^r John Williams.²⁶ It affords me pleasure that in this instance I had anticipated your intentions & from motives of Humanity independent of my respect for his connexions had Shewn him every attention & rendered him every service in my power. The moment I heard of the unfortunate accident which was the Morning afterwards, I went immediately to Fort Erie & accompanied him to Niagara Goal & believe I was instrumental in procuring him indulgencies & accommodations which he would not otherwise have obtained.

Notwithstanding there are very favorable prospects of

²⁶ John R. Williams was the son of Thomas Williams and Mary Cecilia Campau, for whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 169. The son was born in Detroit, May 4, 1782, and was baptized by Colonel De Peyster. Thomas Williams died, Nov. 30, 1785, and on May 1, 1790, his widow married Jacques Lauzon (Lauson) of Detroit. Three children were born of her marriage to Williams, and eight of her union with Lauzon.

In 1802 John R. Williams entered the employ of his uncle, Joseph Campau of Detroit, and on July 20, became his partner in the firm of Campau and Williams. Shortly thereafter he went to Montreal to purchase a stock of goods for the firm, and on the return journey, at Fort Erie, on the evening of October 1, engaged in a drinking bout with Jacques Lacelle, another young merchant of Detroit. A dispute ensued, which ended in the shooting of Lacelle by Williams. For this he languished in prison in Upper Canada somewhat more than a year, utilizing the time in mastering the English language, which had been a foreign tongue to him during his earlier years. Lacelle recovered from his wound and subsequently sued Williams for \$3000 damages, but the trial resulted in a verdict for Williams.

The further career of Williams belongs to the public history of Detroit and Michigan. He served as a trustee of the town in 1804-1805, and as justice of the peace in 1807. In 1817, he was adjutant general of the territorial militia, ultimately rising to the highest rank in the organization. In 1832, as major general, he led the militia to Chicago, which was believed to be in momentary danger of an Indian attack. He drew up the first city charter of Detroit, and became the first mayor in 1824, being subsequently reelected mayor

Mr Lasselles²⁷ recovery, I had advised him to be prepared for the worst, & in consequence of my advice Mr Powell was retained. I am in hopes that from his Exertions & the favorable Situation of Lasselle he will be admitted to Bail, which can be easily procured.

The unfortunate Story has been variously told but my Opinion does not comport with the general one formed in this Neighbourhood & I have had a Herculean task in combatting the torrent of prejudice which broke out against poor Williams, rather undeservedly. I admit that he was much to blame in using pistols, but I cannot see any propriety in trying & convicting a Man before he has been regularly arraigned. When the matter comes properly before the Country it is my belief some who now bluster & say a great deal on the subject will be put to shame for the part they acted upon the occasion—but enough of this.

I understand that the Commercial Treaty between Great Britain & France has been signed & that its provisions give great Satisfaction to the Commercial part of the Community but from the very unsettled state of affairs on the Continent new difficulties are expected to occur.

The Heats & divisions in the United States have got to an alarming height & will it is thought plunge that ill fated Country into all the Horrors of Revolutionary Anarchy. virulence & Calumny are constantly employed in prostrating the most respectable Characters & no person however innocent & obscure is safe from the “lacerations of Slander” & the malignant & rancorous attacks of party spirit.

five times. “It would seem,” says C. M. Burton, “that whenever the City got into great financial straits, the people called upon General Williams to help them out.” In 1831 he bore a leading part in the founding of the *Democratic Free Press*, which is regarded as the ancestor of the present *Detroit Free Press*.

Mr. Williams long lived at the corner of Woodward and Grand River avenues, and a bronze tablet on the business block which today occupies the site, commemorates this fact. Possibly a more permanent memorial has been erected in the naming of John R. Street. Mr. Williams himself added the letter “R” to his name in mature life to distinguish himself from another John Williams of Detroit. In 1805 he married Mary Mott of Albany, who died on Jan. 18, 1830. Ten children were born of the union. Mr. Williams died, Oct. 20, 1854. His personal papers comprise one of the important groups of manuscripts in the B. H. Coll. For published sketches of his career, see Fred Carlisle, *Chronography of . . . Wayne County* (Detroit, 1890), 161-62; *Bench and Bar* (Detroit), IV, 3-7; and *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, XXIX, 491-96.

²⁷ For the career of Jacques Lacelle of Detroit and Raisin River, see *ante*, 34.

I beg my affectionate regards to M^{rs} Askin & Family, & am with Sincere Esteem, Dear Sir,

Your Friend & Servant

Rob^t Nichol

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane near Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Oct^r 15^h 1802 M^r Rob^t Nichol to Jn^o Askin recv^d Ab^t 14^t Nov^r Answ^d Dec^r 10th

DIFFICULTIES OF JOHN AND WILLIAM ROBERTSON

Strabane near Sandwich January 14th 1803

Dear Robert As a long Yankee often passes my House when I least expect it & vows he is starting for Niagara I think it adviseable to have an answer to your favor of the 30th Dec^r last ready in Case such an opportunity should answer. Your Constant Friendly attention to my family has my most warm thanks God be praised they and I are all well as also M^r & M^{rs} Brush and a fine Boy²⁸ I shall mention your kind remembrance of her. I have mentioned to M^r Williams his Uncles the necessity there will be of having Security ready at York early in next Month in case the Judges should be disposed to admit the poor unfortunate Young man to Bail of which M^r Hamilton gave some hopes.²⁹ I have rec^d a letter from William and am truly sorry for him & Johns Situation I did not know or think they would be in any wise Embarrassed. I think he does wright in going

²⁸ Edmund Askin Brush, eldest child of Elijah Brush and Adelaide Askin, was born, Nov. 21, 1802. He was educated at Hamilton College, and subsequently studied law. He early assumed the management of his father's estate (the Brush Farm), to which he largely devoted his active life. He conceived the policy of holding it intact, granting leases to tenants, but refusing to sell the real estate. The growth of the city conferred wealth upon him, and at the time of his death, July 10, 1877, he was reputed to be worth several million dollars. He had been for several decades one of the city's leading citizens, and although never active in politics had held several offices of public trust, including that of water commissioner, 1852-68; police commissioner, 1863-64; commissioner of grades, 1854-61; and city-plan commissioner, 1857-69. In the latter capacity he is said to have been in large measure responsible for the vagaries in street locations which still afflict much of the older section of the city. Mr. Brush was a man of great will power and marked individuality of character and temperament. He married Elizabeth Cass Hunt, daughter of General John E. Hunt and a niece of Governor Cass, who long survived her husband. They had five children; only one, Alfred E. Brush, outlived his father. Data derived from biographical sketches in Farmer, *Hist. of Detroit*, II, 1210; *Detroit Free Press*, July 11, 1877; and newspaper clippings (unidentified) in scrapbooks in B. H. Coll.

²⁹ The allusion is to the affray of John R. Williams with Jacques Lacelle, for which see *ante*, 383-84.

immediately Home to see his Uncle. were my Circumstances different from what they are I would never suffer them to be in any difficulty. Please tell John for it will be too late to write William that in any matter when he knows I can serve him to freely Ask for [aid]. tho I have had but few opportunities of seeing his Brother and him they have as great a Claim on me as any other of my Grand Children and perhaps a greater as their Father and Mother is no more. The former a most worthy man whose honest Character I esteemed much and the latter a most Dutifull fond Child, very Dear to me I hope poor young fellows they never will be so hard drove as not to be able to do better than take refuge with me yet should it so turn out, my Doors will be always oppen for their reception. William Mentions flour with you being only at 16/ N.Y. Cur^v the Cw^t if you can lay it in at that p[rice] besides Casks &^{ca} and will send up 100 Barrells in the Spring I think I can procure a Sale for it at perhaps 32/ half the profits, to be mine or the Boys for our Trouble if its in John's way & he can furnish 50 of them I dare say you will have no objections. I have not wrote him by this opportunity. Its not unlikely but I may send down the *Saguinah* early. If I do I wish the flour to come in her. If not you shall know in good time and then you can send it by the *Montreall* now at Fort Erie.

There is nothing new at [present] in this Quarter worthy of Notice except Miss Bella Grant being married to Captain Gilkinson not Doctor McCrosky³⁰ I dont know how to spell his name, & Young Thomas McCrae to Miss Litle³¹

³⁰ For Doctor William McCoskry's suit for Isabella Grant, see *ante*, 337-39.

³¹ For data concerning Thomas McCrae Sr., see *B. H. R.*, I, 304. He had three sons, William, Thomas, and Alexander. The second of these is apparently the bridegroom of the present document. He married Elizabeth Little on Jan. 4, 1803, the ceremony being performed by James Henry in his capacity as judge of the Court of Common Pleas. The bride may have been a daughter of John Little (for whom see *ibid.*, 305, 309), although her identity is not certainly known. In the marriage entry, Thomas McCrae is designated a "merchant," and various accounts preserved in the B. H. Coll. disclose him as engaged in trade. In 1803 he served as sheriff of Wayne County, and about the same time he performed also the duties of assessor, fire-inspector, marshall, and police officer. In 1809 he petitioned the court in Detroit for a divorce from his wife, who had separated from him in 1807. He was then living in Raleigh Township, Upper Canada, and there were three children of the marriage, Ann, Eliza, and George, born respectively in 1804, 1806, and 1808. A letter of James Woods to Solomon Sibley, May 22, 1818 (ms. in B. H. Coll.), discloses that McCrae had become intemperate and dissolute, and that his father's estate had been willed chiefly to the elder and younger brothers of Thomas Jr. See Ont. Bureau of Archives, *Third Report, passim*; Burton, *Journal of the Board of Trustees, passim*; and Burton, Forsyth-Kinzie-Little genealogy and mss. in Sibley papers, in B. H. Coll., *passim*.

May health & happiness attend you is the Sincere wish
of all mine as well as Dear Robert that of your constant
Friend

M^r Robert Nichol Merchant Queenston

Addressed: Strabane near Sandwich Jan^y 14th 1803. John
Askin Sen^r to M^r Robert Nicholl Queenston (Corry).

MISFORTUNES OF WILLIAM ROBERTSON³²

Queenston Feb^y 23^d, 1803

My Dear Grandfather I should be sorry to let this opportunity pass without informing you of some thing material received by M^r Clark respecting my Uncle William and to thank you in the kindest manner for the affection shown both William and me in your letter to M^r Nichol. I am sorry there should have been any cause to affect your Mind so sensibly and would fain hope that every thing may yet be for the best. Our Cargo small as it is will support us decently and should no unlucky circumstance occur think we may keep out of debt.

My brother left this on the third of Jan^y M^r Clark who arrived the day before bro^t us very distressing accounts of our Uncle William who had arrived in London in the month of August. He is fast vergeing towards his grave by his former ill habit and am afraid will hardly live to see my brother. On his passage home he made a new will, leaving his Daughter only £5000, a trifling legacy to a friend or two and the remainder of his fortune to an Irish Catholic Priest who had been sometime acquainted with him in Quebec and went in the same Vessel with him to England. This will was wrote by the Priest and dictated by himself. the Captⁿ and Mate witnessed it. it was from them his Sister received this information who happened accidentally to be on a visit to London from Scotland at the time they arrived. She used every means in her power to recover her brother from his sad state but in vain, after remaining a Month with him she was obliged to return home her daughter and husband on her arrival set off for the same purpose they

³² From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

bro^t him as far as Liverpool on their way down to Scotland the villain of a priest followed and persuaded my uncle they were taking him to Edinburg to put him in Bridewel (as a Lunatick) They made their escape and when M^r Clark left Scotland were liveing in London in a large Hotel, the Priest and him in continual debauch. his poor daughter is allso there and only a servant woman to attend her. M^r Clark was desired by our relations in Edinburgh to mention all [illegible] to us and insist on my brother going to England immediately. From him I have just heard of his arriving in New York on the 19th he was to sail in two days his letter is dated the 27th My paper is grown short and must close my letter. Will you give me the pleasure of hearing from you soon and whether you think it necessary to secure my Uncles property in this Country by getting the deeds for his Land. the power of att^y gives the power to sell them. Your affection will I hope excuse this long letter. I beg my kindest love to all the Family and believe me to be

Your affect^t Grandson

John Robertson

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Feb^y 23^d No 3 M^r Jn^o Robertson to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^o 8th & Answ^d 9th March.

CARES OF MRS. GRANT³³

Amherstburg May 17th 1803

I was glad to see your dear boys, & Nelly here And to understand from them and your favour by Charles, that upon the whole my dear M^{rs} Askin and you were in tolereble good health

Which will add more to both your ease is a letter from Captⁿ Pelkenton³⁴ to Captⁿ Cowan gaven a healthy account of Captⁿ Meredith & family in England

³³ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

³⁴ Robert Pilkington was born in 1765 and in 1787 became second lieutenant in the Royal Artillery. In 1789 he was transferred to the Royal Engineers and was stationed at Quebec. He was on Governor Simcoe's staff, serving in Upper Canada from 1793 to 1796 and in this capacity seems to have performed much useful service. He constructed Fort

I imagine the Children has been fully gratified with their Jaunt down from the very pretty Launch, our good And really handsome, Vessel to all present appearance has made.

It is intirely out of poor dear M^{rs} Grant ever to leave Gross Point while such a numerous family as she has with part of the slaves very ungratefull and turbulant, And herself never relieved from the helme, had a long speale of it. And if she, dear Soul lives her lot never to quit it

Even Johnny who is much interested and alert, cannot do any thing without consulting M^{rs} Grant except kissing his Wife, & M^r Duff and Phillis has been for this week past perplexed and Troubled very much with a Cursed negroe wench they bought some time Agoe from Captⁿ Elliott. She and a negro man are both in Goal here for theft and information of a great number of vagarents hovering about here to bring off as many negros as they can And as I am told forming a Town on the other side of Sandusky. at present there is forty Black men there. There was no body from Detroit yesterday at the Launch

M^{rs} Grant is also fitting out Poor dear Alick for his voyage to Montreal I shall be up Soon to bring him down I shall be ready to sail with the new vessel Again the begining of next month Harrow told me when I saw him last he would go down with me all the way to York I have been looking or thinking regarding the Militia Again[st] the First of June. I think Captain Clarke as he and his company are so near Sandwich better Join your Battalion which I shall mention in my order in [a] few days. Major Elliot Commands the Battàlion here. Your Son John is to Call on me to day to see a return of your Battalion

Captain Cowan tells me he spoke some time since to M^r Reynolds for the Loan of a Cabble for a friend of his. M^r Reynolds gave for answer that the commd^g off^{rs} order must

Miamis on the Maumee. In 1796 he was recommended by Simcoe to the Duke of Portland as an officer especially qualified to survey the boundary line between Canada and the United States. Pilkington remained in Canada until 1803. In 1825 he became Major General of Fortifications in England. In 1799 he was given a grant of land in Canada, later known as the Township of Pilkington. He later undertook to colonize this grant and his efforts in this connection are said to have kept him poor the remainder of his life. He died in London, July 6, 1834. Information derived from documents in *Simcoe Papers, passim*; *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*; Robertson, *Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, passim*; and sketch in *Toronto Canadian Countryman*, Dec. 9, 1922.

be procured, & then two receipts taken one to be sent to M^r Craigoir[?] the other to remain in office. Tho I shall take an opportunity [to] get to talk to him. no less went up the other day as I am told in the American Packet then nine sett of Stills, and Sixteen more at Presquill so I think we Farmers Will get vent for our grain. So long since you & I has had no correspondance, this scrole will tire you out Remember me in the most affectionate manner to my dear M^{rs} Askin And belive [me] my dear Sir to be you, & yours, kind wisher & Friend

Alex Grant

John Askin Esq^r

I heard the other day that the gentlemen of Detroit honoured themselves or Governer Harrison with given a ball and that two of our daughters was there. And that M^r May was so polite as to go for them to the Point, and had them lodged at his own house which is very kindly of him. tho I never was there. Your Son in law³⁵ took umbrage at Gross Point at M^{rs} Grant, & cursed and sowrn at the Point some says at M^{rs} Grant. She says [she] never showed more attention to any man than she did to him when there. Donovan was with him when there. I asked Donovan what could offend M^r B. the only thing iritate him because there was not some fine Cherrybounce M^{rs} G. had formerly produced. last year the cherreys failed.

Endorsed: Amherstburgh May 17th 1803 Commodore Grant to Jn^o Askin. Answer^d y^e 18th

INDEBTEDNESS OF CAPT. JOHN WHISTLER³⁶

I was extremely sorry to learn from Charles that you were sued on my account be asured its the last step I ever wish to take against you or any Gentleman If I can by any other means obtain [or] even secure whats due me. I'm convinced there must have [been] some mistake in this matter & if I have the pleasure of seeing you I will convince you it is so I even mentioned to M^r Brush that as you might be pinched

³⁵ The allusion is to Elijah Brush for whom see *ante*, 370.

³⁶ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

for want of Money I would take any Valuable thing else [as] payment. how M^r Anderson who gave me in an Account of what he received, did not mention your having paid him, surprises me much, for I know he likes you and will be sorry for what happened and yet he is in some degree the cause for not letting me know that you paid. An other matter also surprises me why you did not show M^r Anderson's receipt when M^r Brush asked payment. I shall only add that I feel for all Gentlemen with large familys therefore never wished to distress them If it could be avoided & I'm sure M^r Brush has the same disposition I am Sir

Your most Obed^t very humble Servant
 Cap^t Whistler at Detrot

Endorsed: Near Sandwich July 9th 1803 John Askin
 Sen^r to Captain Whistler at Detroit. (Copp)

DEATH OF HUGH HEWARD³⁷

Near Sandwich July 22^d 1803

Sir Your favour of the 20th June last did not reach me untill last evening the Widow Heward arrived here some time ago & delivered to me the last Will and Testament of the late M^r Hugh Heward saying it was his directions to deliver it into my hands she also offered to deliver me over a Trunk with his papers but as I seen the great impropriety of acting as Executor when I could not be of use I therefore declined the papers and as to the will I wish to deliver it either to the widow who gave it to me or any other who may be duly authorized The Honorable D. W. Smith should he come out, of course is the properest person being also an executor and being on the spott may be able to render Service as the deceased, his property is in that Quarter. in this I believe he has but little, except a few debts. any assistance I can give in recovering them or in any other manner, If I can help the Widow Son or Nephew of an Old Friend I will most cheerfully do, when authorized by whoever may be legally appointed. I have but little knowledge of the late M^r Hewards property you who reside at York should know best what will remain for his Widow Son and Nephew

³⁷ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

When his Debts are discharged. I dont know that he owes anything in this Quarter. the Will is worded nearly as you mention, the Widow to have the use of the Estate real and personal during her Life which afterwards is to be divided equally between the Son & Nephew of the deceased. however this mode of bequeathing seems to me to admit of difficulty as much of the personal estate must consist of Perishable Articles which it would be perhaps out of the power of the Widow to preserve during her life, what the real construction should be is much better known to those who have studied the Law I am Sir

Your most Obed^t Humble Servant

M^r William Bond³⁸ at York

Endorsed: Near Sandwich July 22^d 1803 John Askin Sen^r to M^r William Bond at York (Copy) Widow Heward &c Hon D. W. Smith Mentioned

NEWS OF WILLIAM ROBERTSON³⁹

Queenstown July 27th 1803

Dear Grandfather You could scarce think to have had a letter from me so soon from this place. my speedy return will no doubt surprise you as much as it did my other friends; I have not as yet been gone 7 Months; yet was I above five weeks in England. I reached London on the 21^t of March, just three days after my Uncle was married to M^r Ogilvy's Mother. I hope this will prove a fortunate circumstance for him, from the good character given of her and her influence over him, I am in hopes she will be able to reclaim him from that dreadfull habit he had. I did not find Matters so bad as they were said to have been. that there was such a person as a parson who went over with him who had his passage and other Expences paid, and who was also fond of the bottle I beleive was true, but nothing More; I found

³⁸ William Bond was a sergeant in the Queen's Rangers. As early as 1794 he had a farm on Yonge Street about eighteen miles north of Toronto, surrounding a lake which is still called Bond's Lake. Here he developed Toronto's first nursery. An amusing account of his efforts to sell the property is given by Scadding in *Toronto of Old*, 462 ff. See also Robertson, *Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, 307; and *Simcoe Papers*, III, 24.

³⁹ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

him much better than I expected, he was very happy to See me indeed, so much so that he would scarce allow me to return after a Months residence with him. had it not been that his affairs as well as my own required My presence I beleive I should not; It was seldom I could get him to speak of his affairs here; he does not Seem to care much about them. he used to speak frequently of you and the family. He seldom writes his nearest relations. he will not give himself the least trouble about any one thing I have by no means any reason to repent my journey he has given John & myself a Credit on the House of Parker Gerard, Ogilvy & C^o for £2000 Hfx We have not as yet quite determined what to do, whether to remain here or go to Lower Canada. As John writes you on bussiness, I shall not at present Say anything to you on that Score. It gives me much pleasure to hear that you and all the family have had such good health this Season; I landed in Ireland from America, and I beleive travelled thro your Native Town, Strabane, I think 16 or 18 Miles beyond Londonderry. I enquired if there were any persons of your Name there and understood there were I was then in the Mail Coach on my Way to Dublin. I was Much pleased with the Country round the latter place. I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you Soon. with my kindest love to M^{rs} Askin & all your kind family, beleive Me to be with the greatest affection for you and them.

Your Grandson

William Robertson

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane near Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston July 27^h 1803 W^m Robertson Jn^r
to Jn^o Askin Recv^d 10 Aug^t Answ^d y^e 11th

FROM ALEXANDER HENRY TO JOHN ASKIN

Montreal 18 Aug. 1803

Dear old freind This moment your letter came to Hand and I will not loose one moment in writing to you. I own I have been too long in not writing but am determined to

make it up. no one [is] more happy in hearing from you and family than I am, I despair of ever seeing you in this World, what may be done in the next can't say, time will discover. I am growing old, and infirm have been laid up this five weeks with being overheated at a fire in this Place. some evil dispos'd persons has sett fire, to this place eight times within this Month and bur[n]t upwards of thirty dwelling Houses, two Churches, the prison & Colege, besides a number of stores out houses &^{ca}. it is clear that it has been done on purpose. five hundred pound reward is offer'd to discover. it must be french agents. your boots I will get made, am sorry you did not send one of your legs. Knowls is Dead but his young man may have your measure as for the *Saw a Bardeaux*⁴⁰ I dont know what it is however will find it out. I find you have turnd farmer. so much the better you are out of the chances of Misfortune. I have turn'd Auctioneer to get a living which is not a pleasant business, however any port in a Storm. you and me missed our port when we left off the N West business while we was young, but it is too late to repine. in a very few years it will be the same, as if we enjoyed every thing we wish'd. your old friend Todd & M^cGill still continues well. that is Todd is well after dinner, but always sick in the mornings. he is geting old every way. I wrote to you last year respecting James Frazer and I also wrote to him which he has not answer'd. In Casety & Williams Accounts there is a large sum due by Tague the spanard, and I am informd he has given Lands for the amount to Frazer & his agents, and that he has recoverd many other debts which he has not accounted for. this therefore is to request you will examine him & the Books and he must Transmit to me all security, for Lands or otherwise which he may have for or on account of said Casety & Williams and that he forwards me an account of the whole and delivers you a cobby, otherwise I will be under the necessity of sending an Agent on purpose or I will empower any person you recommend & take the Books & affairs out of his Hands. this you may tell him from me. last fall he wrote me he intended to make a dividend, since which [I] have not heard from him.

⁴⁰ For the explanation of this line see *post*, 396.

he never render[e]d us an account of what he has received, only made dividends & remitted them, which was not his business. only to Transmit to me what he received from the Estate, was what he ought to have done. I will write to him by this opportunity. be so good as to take a moment to think of this business and let me know. as you are out of the furr way I need say nothing to you. much money has been made by Bears. but they must take care. my family is all well except myself and join in every good wish for you and yours. & remain ever

your affectionate old friend

Alexander Henry

N.B. pray what did you do with the note of M^eGregor to R Henry. if you cant get any thing send the note to me.

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit

Endorsed: Montreal Aug^t 18^h 1803 M^r Alex^r Henry to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 30^h Sep^r Answ^d y^e 4^h Oct^r

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ALEXANDER HENRY⁴¹

Near Sandwich Oct^r 4th 1803

My Dear Henry Now I have started you I will keep you a going your kind Letter dated the 18th of August reached me the last of September. Your a nice boy not to say anything about your family pray do [you] not think that M^{rs} Askin and I have some regard for them however from your silence on that head we have reason to suppose they are all well and we most sincerely wish it. I will tell you news that you will like. I'm better in health and more contented in mind thank God than I have been for Thirty years past and yet during that time I have not had great reason to compllain yet dont think I'm rich far from it. If anyone say's so he tells a *Whopper* but I begin to see clear that no one will suffer by me tho payment may be delayed on this side I have Lands well secured that brings me 20/ per Acre. tho not all Cash down but well secured and on the other side I have a quantity of Land also part

⁴¹ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

of which tho not the greater is secured also my Family seems also in a fair way of being provided for and under these circumstances if I was not content I would deserve not to have cause to be so.

You begin to loose your french. formerly *Soi a Bardeau* was a particular kind of Plow Shear and not a Saw for Shingles as you would make it to pay for the Boots and it which I suppose you have sent P^r M^r Donovan, I have inclosed you Mons^r Giassons Draft, he does not say However on whom for 199th, but as he is in Montreall it's no matter.

I'm very sorry for the distresses of the poor people who have suffered by fire it seems to me punishments are not adequate to the Crimes always. If the wretches who set fire were to be burnt from time to time so as to raise blisters be cured and burnt again [it] would be a greater Example than [to] be sent out of the World by the run. I have nothing further to do with Bear Skins my Trade is in those of Sheep and Lambs.

I note what you say respecting M^r Fraser and will make it my business to enquire into the matter and let you know. however at all events he can no longer transact your nor any mans Business as usual. he is following our worthy friend M^r Robertson fast its strange how people go. You and I had the best right to bruise the Grogg being old Champaigners perhaps you would do well to give me a power to Name an Attorney and I will look out for the properest person for I cannot do it myself. after our joint best wishes for all you and yours believe me to be to the last My Dear Friend

Your unalterable Friend

Alexander Henry Esq^r at Montreal

Endorsed: Near Sandwich Oc^{br} the 4th 1803 John Askin Sen^r to Alex^r Henry Esq^r Merchant Montreal (Copy)

CONDITION OF DEBTORS IN VINCENNES⁴²

Vincennes 24 December 1803

Dear Sir: Your very much esteemed Favors of the 24th

⁴² From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

September and 18th November last were received by the Company's Courier.

The circumstances you state of the conduct of DuBois in the transaction with M^r M^oGregor exhibit his character in its real point of view. Vigo is at present in the Illinois Country, and is expected in a few days. Upon his return he shall be pressed for the payment of his Bond to you, now in my possession, and payable at the time you mention. No opportunity has yet presented of disposing of the Lott which DuBois wanted to purchase. The Garrison has been erected on the adjoining [one], which afforded a more eligible site. The Contractor for the troops has some thoughts of purchasing it, on Account of a Spring which is conveniently placed for a Distillery. Were I to form an opinion of its value by comparing it with that of the tract next it, I should estimate its value about five hundred dollars. I shall dispose of it If I can obtain about that sum. The small tract you had from Etienne S^{te} Marie has not yet been confirmed, for want of testimony to prove actual cultivation. If it is confirmed, it would bring one hundred and perhaps fifty Dollars. I am very happy that you are authorised by M^r Henry to receive the Books and Papers of the Estates of Tho^s Williams & Jn^o Cassedy⁴³ from M^r Fraser. Whilst he was in health, none could have been more attentive to business I believe; but I found such an alteration in him, when I was last at Detroit, that I declined talking to him on the subject of those debts put into my management by him. At my return I pressed Vigo for a settlement of his obligation to the Estate of Williams, and would have admitted about Eleven Packs of Beaver which he says he p^d on account, and accept of lands to please me, at one Dollar an acre for the balance, on the principle of his inability to pay in Cash. But he insisted on my allowing two doll^{rs} for the land, without choice, which I would not agree to; and I finished by instituting an Action, returnable at March Term. Bail has been given; and I have been informed he has said that after his arrival from the Illinois, that he intended to go into the Atlantic States to dispose of his lands for Cash

⁴³ For the career of John Casety, see *B. H. R.*, I, 185.

to pay his Debts. Of Pierre Gamelins Obligations I have made the most. I established his right to some Land and then to obtain it from him I agreed, to give up one of the Notes for the part he owned after allowing myself part for my trouble and Expençe in securing it. a Tract adjoining that which you will obtain by your Judgment ag^t Paul Gamelin will form the greatest part of what will be coming to the Estate of Tho^s Williams by this transaction. I therefore wish you would attend to have it and the other ascertained. Gamelin's Conveyance to me has been recorded at Detroit where that tract is situate, and the Deed for the other in this County. When I can dispose of it so as to realise, you shall be informed, or M^r Fraser. Unfortunately, Gamelin is almost always intoxicated at the Expençe of *any person* so that there is no hopes of ever getting any more Property from him; for at present he has none, nor can he ever acquire any. Should any favorable circumstance occur respecting your own business or that of those Gentlemen's Estates, you shall be regularly informed by the Mail.

In the mean time I take the liberty of presenting my most respectful comp^{ts} to M^{rs} Askin and all your Family; and of wishing you all many happy returns of the Season, in which none can be more sincere than Dear Sir

Your much obliged and most obedient Serv^t

William M^oIntosh

John Askin Esquire.

APPOINTMENT AT ST. JOSEPH

Montreal 24 Decemb^r 1803

My dear Sir I was duly favord with yours of the 5^h Octb^r respecting your Son Johns wish to get the appointment M^r Chaboillez⁴⁴ has at S^t Josephs. I beli[e]ve you must be wrong[ly] informed respecting that Gent^m quitting his situation. I have enquired at his friends here, also at

⁴⁴ Charles Chaboillez was appointed clerk and storekeeper at St. Joseph Island in the summer of 1802, succeeding Thomas Duggan, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 286. He remained here until the summer of 1807, when he was succeeded by John Askin Jr., who reported that he intended to go to Lower Canada within a month. See *post*, 553-54. Various allusions to Chaboillez at St. Joseph are found in Vol. XXIII of *Mich. Pio. Colls.*

the Indian department, neither of which know any thing of such intention so situated it would be improper to make any application. M^r Chaboillez friends tell me the[y] suppose he will not stay there above a Year Longer & when I see Gen^l Hunter I will mention on a vacancy my wish he would appoint John but to intitle him to it he must be attentive and carefull to Transmit Accounts in his present employment as Gen^l Hunter is verry exact and wishes all under him to be so. I am sorry to hear that Cap^t M^cKee & M^r Ironside⁴⁵ have got there pay for irregularity in their Accounts & Vouchers. M^r M^cGill will answer your Letters respecting Land & property. I have been for some time Confined with a Complaint in my heart. I am getting fast old. Wishing you M^{rs} Askin & family many happy returns of the Season I am as usual

Ever Your Sinc[e]re friend

Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Sen^r Esq^r Detroit

Endorsed: Montreal Dec^r 24^h 1803 Isaac Todd Esq^r to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 28^h Jan^y 1804 Answ^d y^e 29^h Jan^y

AGREEMENT FOR OPERATING THE *SAGUINAH*

Articles of agreement, made and concluded at this day of in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and three; between George Meldrum & John Askin Merchants on the one part, & Captain Fearson of Detroit of the other part Witnesseth

Article 1st That the aforesaid George Meldrum & John Askin equal owners of the Sloop *Saguinah* do hereby bargain and sell to the said John Fearson, one third share in the Sloop *Saguinah*; with a third of her tackle rigging, apparel, Boates, stages, & every other thing to her belonging; for the sum of one hundred & sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and four pence New York Currency, to be paid to each seperately; forming in all for said third of said Vesel &^{ea} the sum of three hundred and thirty three pounds six shillings & eight pence New York Currency as aforesaid

⁴⁵ George Ironside, for sketch of whose career see *B. H. R.*, I, 332.

2nd And it is mutually agreed between the said George Meldrum John Askin, & John Fearson, that the said *Saguinah* shall be put in repair; in order to sail in the spring, at the equal and joint charges of all three, in which is to be included the main Sail now making by said John Fearson.

3^d That the said George Meldrum, John Askin & John Fearson, in their joint capacity as owners of the *Saguinah*, do agree with the said John Fearson, to pay him the sum of eighty five pounds Halifax Currency; for his service, trouble and pains in Navigating said Vessel, during the whole of the next season as well as directing her repairs, hiring workmen and Sailors purchasing materials and provisions and in every respect doing all in his power for the interest of the owners of said Vessel; without any other charge whatever; except for making the Main Sail which he has now on hand: and further said owners of the Sloop *Saguinah*, do hereby agree with said Captain or Master that he shall have all the advantages of the Cabin Pasengers, & their reasonable baggage for his own use; however nothing that pays freight is to be taken into the Cabin, unless the hold is first full except it may be Suger or Provisions for Captain Fearson own or family's use, for which no freight in the Cabin will be charged. He is likewise to have the same rations as formerly with this exception; the Suger to be twenty five lbs. brown, and as many of white and as many candles and as many as the Vessel may want. & the said John Fearson on his part agrees with the aforesaid owners to accept of the aforesaid pay and recompence, & perform (so far as he can) the duties above mentioned from the present time untill the Vessel may be laid up in the fall.

4th That said Captain Fearson will purchase whatever may be wanted for the Vessel use and hire Sailors and workmen on the best terms in his power, giving the preferance to the owners only, when they will sell as cheap as others and also consulting them [when] any purchase of consequence is to be paid or men hired, unless absent from where they live

5th That in case any other person should in future wish to purchase any share in said *Saguinah*, the said Meldrum,

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

Askin & Fearson do consent that the terms on which a majority of them agree, shall be binding on the whole; as well as to the Port or Bay, where the Vessel should sail the first, or succeeding Voyages

6th That as soon as may be convenient, Captain Fearson will send to John Askin, accounts of all the purchases he may make Freight Notes, &^{oa} which said Askin promises to enter into a Book properly; and always to be ready for the inspection of all the owners without making any charge for so doing.

7th That all monies received for freights or any purchase of a share, in said Vessel shall be first employed to discharge what the Vessel may owe to the Master, Sailors; or others not partners in her before the dividend shall be made

8th George Meldrum promises to assist Captain Fearson so far as he can, in obtaining workmen and sailors cheap, to use his Interest to get freight for the *Saguinah* and to try and borrow stores or let Captain Fearson know where he thinks they can be obtained cheapest, & in all respects which relate to said Vessel to give what assistance he can, so as not to neglect his other affairs, & for which he is not to make any charge.

9th And it is mutually agreed on by and the parties aforesaid that in case they shall think fit in future to make any purchase of Flour, Pork, liquor of any kind Salt, or other Articles for their joint accounts That it must be done with the approbation of the whole and a Memmorandum signed by them of the articles they agree so to purchase

Lastly in Testimony of the parties consent and approbation to this triplicate agreement according to the true Interest and meaning thereof they have hereunto set their hands and affixed their Seals the day and year first above written

Witness Present

PRICE OF FLOUR

Fort Erie February 1st 1804

John Askin Esq^{re}

Dear Sir I on the 18th ult^o wrote you a hasty letter

in reply to your favor of the 3rd but as that could not be very Satisfactory, and as the time given by our immaculate Post Master, to answer letters, after the Arrival of a Mail is seldom Sufficient for them to get up here, I avail myself of a little leisure and a Knowledge of what will happen to reply to it more at large.

Flour with us, owing to the great demand and a Knowledge of your wants, is now high, and will I fear rise. little has yet Come to Market & the farmers in my Neighbourhood are Keeping it up, with the view of getting a higher price. it cannot be Shipt by the Merchant at less than Five Dollars P Barrel of 196 lbs, at which price I will deliver the Quantity you order for yourself. the Pork shall also be procured, tho I fear the price of that article, will also be much increased, the Market being bare owing to the large Supply purchased by Government

I have endeavoured to Bargain with several of my Neighbours for flour, but they all Keep aloof so that I cannot well Say what quantity I shall be able to procure at even five Dollars. I am in hopes however that I Shall be able to make out 100 Barrels. I shall also put up about 100 Bags of Corn. I will thank you to say what proportion the Winchester Bushel bears to the Minot, as we have no Measure of that Kind here⁴⁶ Ashes I have in Abundance.

I wrote you the other day Per M^r Burns, to which refer. No European Intelligence of Importance since that time, tho we are in dayly Expectation of something very interesting from England.

I request the usual Compliments to the Family and am My Dear Sir with the sincerest good wishes

Yours very faithfully

Rob Nichol

Addressed: John Askin Esq^{re} Strabane Near Sandwich

⁴⁶ A manuscript memorandum of 1765 upon the condition of the colony states the minot to be the equivalent of five pecks. In 1799 a list of grievances of citizens of Detroit drawn up for presentation to the General Assembly contains a statement concerning the inequitable system of weights and measures in use; merchants purchased grain from the inhabitants by the French bushel of 40 Winchester quarts, while they sold salt and grain by the Winchester bushel of 32 quarts. Askin in replying to Nichol's query (see *post*, 403) stated there was "no real standard" established in Detroit between the Winchester bushel and the French minot.

Endorsed: Fort Erie Feb^r 1st 1804 M^r Rob^t Nichol to
Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 25^h Answ^d March 1st

GOODS FOR DETROIT TRADE

Near Sandwich Feb^y 2^d 1804

Dear Robert Your favours of the 28th December & 18 June last reached me long since and [I] observe what you say respecting the Hulled Corn but am sorry you are doubtfull about furnishing the Flour and Pork I think I before observed to you that these last articles were more saleable than the Corn, yet when there was demand for it, the profit was often greater. Flour with us is now at 40/ but that not owing to the Mills not going than the want of wheat which is only 9/ winchester measure your observation of paying interest where Cash is laid out, or the produce furnished will fetch Cash is just and reasonable and to which I can have no objections for you know to force a Sale on any thing in this part of the Country is impossible and the flour that fetches not 20/ in one Month has brought double the next therefore it is better for you and me to pay any interest than be obliged to make payment on a certain day where the produce is sold payment with interest will be immediately made. there is a great prospect of much gain on Whisky which can be laid in at 5/6 and unless cast away never can cause a loss, but [I] observe if Pork and Flour could be got from the American side and such vouchers sent as would prove that here it would be a great saving when sent to Michilimacinac. the Duty on the former is 2/ per Gallon and on all provissions above 12/ Per Cent. The *Saguinah* is now under repair and if the Captain & Carpenter does not deceive me much she will sail from this as early as any Vessell.

The whole Family join M^{rs} Askin in wishing and in every wish that may tend to your Happiness and wellfair and I remain as usual D^r Robert

Yours most truly

M^r Robert Nicholl Merchant, Queenston

Endorsed: Near Sandwich Feb^y 2^d 1804. John Askin
S[^r] to M^r Robert Nicholl Merc^t Queenston Copy

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

EARL OF SELKIRK'S ENTERPRISE

Niagara Feby 15 1804

I am this Moment favored with yours of the 2nd & 4^h & shall answer them in succession Flour Corn & Pork shall be provided & perhaps a little Whisky, properly provided, *id est* from the States, Certified &° &°

I am Sorry to find that my letter by Burns did not reach you by himself both on his Lordships Acct & yours. his business will in time be profitable, & is most certainly respectable Lord S.⁴⁷ will however be at Detroit himself in the course of next year & will be able to discriminate between Honesty, Intelligence, Plain Dealing & respectability on the one Side, & Vulgarity low Cunning, Over-reaching &° &° on the other

A Number of letters to Answer by both Mails Obliges me to Conclude briefly by saying that Neither time or distance shall Obliterate the Sincere & Affectionate regard, felt for yourself & Family, by Dear Sir

Your friend & Humble Serv^t

Rob Nichol

Addressed: John Askin Esq^{re} Strabane Near Sandwich

Endorsed: Fort Erie Feb^r 11^h 1804 M^r Rob^t Nichol to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 25th Answ^d March 1st

AFFAIRS OF THOMAS WILLIAMS AND COMPANY⁴⁸

Near Sandwich March 2^d 1804

Dear Henry I was favoured some time ago with a Letter from you conveying a blank power of Attorney which agreeable to your Ideas and my oppinion I filled up with M^r Brushes name for it appears to me people make payments much sooner to Lawyers (even when they do not sue)] than to others. M^r Fraser has been very unwell but now is better which is the reason that he has not before now delivered the statement Books Notes &^{ca} to M^r Brush (who I have seen to day) and says he will get them in a

⁴⁷ Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk (1771-1820), whose colonizing efforts in Canada included the settlement of Baldoon, near modern Wallaceburg, Ont.

⁴⁸ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

few days I have shewed him your letter of the 20th January as well as that which you wrote at the time you sent the power of Attorney to the contents of both he says he will pay due attention. M^r M^oIntosh writes me he will have a Judgment against Mons^r Vigoe for what he owed Thomas Williams & C^o on M^r Casity in this month at Post Vincent. M^r Vigoe offered him lands at 16/ per acre but M^r Mackintosh thought them worth only 8/ therefore commenced a Suit. I have carefully looked over my old papers but can not find the Note which you mention which surprises me much for I never loose a paper and therefore think that if I ever had it I must have mentioned it however the loss to the owner cannot be anything for M^r M^oGregor I dare say will not deny the debt but really I believe he has Nothing to pay on the contrary I believe he and Family are mostly maintained by his Son & Cousin or Nephew, for I dont know which John M^oGregor is.

Was I strong I would lodge some money with you to buy articles at auction but that is not the case and I fear will not [be], for old people seldom get stronger. however if a brass kettle not Copper it being dearer falls in your way to contain 70 Gallons please purchase it if under the common price & I will send you the Cash for it I want it for my Distillery. Please send me a pair of Fishermans Boots not the very heaviest sort, but good soals, also a Plow Shear such as last year, these two will cost about £3 "15" Haf^x and I believe you have about that ballance in your hands. If M^r Geasson comes up next summer I will shew him as clear as the Nose on his face that he owed me the 24 Dollars I demanded and now much more as I have a last years freight acc^t against him. I did not know it was fashionable now for a man not to sign his name to what he wrote but I know your letter as well without as with. However after best wishes for you and yours according to the old fashion I subscribes myself Dear Henry Your unchangeable Friend Alexander Henry Esq^r at Montreal

Endorsed: Near Sandwich March 2^d 1804. John Askin Senior to Alexander Henry Esq^r Montreal. Copy

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

PROPERTY OF ISACC TODD AND JAMES MCGILL

Near Sandwich March 2^d 1804

Dear Sir Your favour of the 28th Jan^y last, reached me the 28th of last month the Deeds for the whole 40 Lots sold M^r Todd and you are now ready you have 3 Each which are bounded by the Belle River & 1 each within a few Lots of these which with the 32, before, forms the whole. I'm sorry for the delay which however has not been my fault. I have several other Deeds to receive of Government and will think myself happy if they are ready in twelve Months to come to be taken out of the office indeed it has at this session been reported to the Governor and Executive Council not to Issue a Commission for settling further claims as there are more reports in th[e] offices at York than Deeds can be made for in less than twelve months. I note what you say respecting M^r Brushes purchase, also not to make repairs nor let any place out, that rent can not be got for. I will act as you direct. as to M^r Brush I imagine he will pay yearly or perhaps all next summer I dont see any great difference it can make to him therefore will advise him to [do] it for he is not pinched in money matters for a sum of that kind. I begin to think from his limiting a time for payment that he has made a purchase for some other who can not make better payments. I'm sure that im not less hurt than you and M^r Todd are at the purchases made of me on the other side turning out so badly I can only say that my best endeavours have been used to prevent it. im happy that those on this side will make some amends. The best prospect I see for the Wind Mill is to sell it to M^r May and give him full time to pay otherwise he can not purchase. he is noted for immidiately puting every thing he buys in the best Order therefore the worst that can happen would be taking it back again when it would be worth double what it is today. both M^r Park & Meldrum are of my oppinion I wish to have yours soon M^r May has not told me (but M^r Brush has) that he wis[h]ed to purchase it.

I remain &^{ca}

J A

James M^cGill Esq^r Merch^t Montreal

Endorsed: Near Sandwich March 2^d 1804 Jn^o Askin to
Jm^s M^cGill Esq^r at Montreal (Copp)

NEWS FROM COLONEL DE PEYSTER

Dumfries 11th March 1804

My dear Askin Your friendly letter from near Sandwich opposite Hog Island, without a date is truly flattering as it convinces both M^{rs} D and myself that you are that steady friend I always supposed you would prove, for it is time alone which is the true touchstone of friendship. You have introduced however a number of new acquaintances all of whom I sincerely wish may prosper. Our old ones I see are made of good tough materials. the Comodores good Lady I fear will however make him tender through too much indulgence. mind to remember us kindly to that Loving couple. Mon Ami Maisonville you say enjoys his Health. *Chant il encore les Vespres?* If so, tell him it is time he should learn some other tune which must not however be a gloomy one. it would misbecome one of a turn of mind so like my own. You'll say this is no small compliment to myself.

The bearer of this M^r Dickson the Elder, will give you a full account of our Arming in this Quarter for the reception of Bonaparti and his Numerous Attendants. There is so much to be said upon the Subject of that little Corse that I must refer you to printed, and to Verbal accounts. Whilst he may expect a Warm reception in case he has the folly to land in Britain.

My old Indian friends, the Chiefs I mean I hear are mostly dead Particularly Quiouigousquin and Moneso Bennets fr[i]end Matchiquis. If Wawayachterin the Pottawatomic is living and you see him tell him that I have not forgot him nor any of my Huron friends.

Your friend M^{rs} DePeyster you may tell M^{rs} Askin is as happy as the day is long and Sleeps all Night as sound as a top. I have my health thank God, and must still have some small share of activity or I could not justify in these busteling times having accepted of a Deputy Lieutenantcy of the County with the Command of a Regiment of Volunteers as fine a set of fellows as you ever beheld. If I begin the other side of this paper I shall write it full, and thereby

fatigue you not a little. I will therefore conclude here with thanks for your past favors to me, which I often reflect upon with gratitude. Remember us to M^{rs} Askin and all friends in the kindest terms and believe me truly My dear Sir

Your friend & Serv^t

A^t DePeyster

Addressed: Jn^o Askin Esq^r Sandwich opposite Hog Isl-
and North America fav^r M^r Dickson

Endorsed: Dumfries March 11^h 1804 Colonel DePey-
ster to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 15 June Answ^d y^e 30^h Aug^t 1805

COTTON SEEDS FOR MRS. ASKIN

Poste Vincennes le 24 Mars, 1804

Madame Je Profitte de L'occassion de la voiture de Mr. Dubois Pour vous faire parvenir les graines de Cotton que vous m'avez demandé je vous en envoye un petit sac qui sont des graines méelee jaune et blanche de la meilleure qualité qu'il e été a mon pouvoir de vous envoyer Si au cas je puis m'en procurer du jeaune point mellée de bonne sorte je vous les envairais par quelqu' autre aucassion et Si je puis vous être de quelque utilité pour tout autre chause je vous prie de ne point m'épargné je me ferai un plaisir de pouvoir vous satisfaire bien de mes respect et amities a Mr. Votre Epouse et a toute vôtre famille et suis vôtre tres humble et

Obéissant Serviteur

Fran Bazadone

Addressed: A Madame Madame Askin Résident aux
Detroit

Endorsed: Post Vincennes le 24^e Mars 1804 Mons^r
Bazadone to Madame Askin Reponse faite le 24^e May 1804

Translation

Post Vincennes, March 24, 1804

Madam: By Mr. Dubois' conveyance I am sending you a small sack of the cotton seeds you requested. They are mixed, yellow and white, and of the best quality that I

could get for you. In case I can procure some good yellow, unmixed, I shall send it by another opportunity, and if I can serve you in any way whatever, I beg you not to spare me. It will be a pleasure to me to be able to give you any assurance of my respect and friendship for your husband and for all your family, and to remain

Your most humble and obedient servant,
François Bazadone

CARE OF PROPERTY OF TODD AND MCGILL

April 3^d 1804

Dear Charles I was very sorry to learn that M^r Brush had taken down the Fence between his Orchard & the four little Houses & let Doctor Scott⁴⁹ plow all between the Houses in Order to plant potatoes. I have Every wish in the World to Oblige Doc^r Scott and any place on Land belonging to me when M^r Brush chooses he may let him plant a spott but as those Houses & the Lots belonging to them are not mine I can not have them Occupied or planted by any person but those who hire them, nor must they be Inclosed with any Other Lots but left perfectly Oppen & separate for to hire to any One who wants them. for you

⁴⁹ William McDowell Scott was a British subject who, according to his own statement "entered" the United States early in 1796 and several years later became a citizen. The date of his coming to Detroit has not been learned. On Sept. 9, 1801, he was married here to Mary Ann Meldrum, daughter of George Meldrum and Mary Catherine Angélique Chapoton, who was born in Sandwich, Sept. 2, 1786. In 1803 Scott became a trustee of Detroit, and during the ensuing decade he served at different times as justice of the peace, justice of the Court of Quarter Sessions, judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and U. S. marshall. In 1805 he is listed as an attorney, and the same year he was captain of riflemen in the Legionary Corps, of which Elijah Brush was lieutenant colonel. In fact, Scott's activities were so various that only a portion of them can be listed here. Despite his official activities, he was frequently cited for violations of the fire regulations of Detroit. Scott was a member of the Michigan militia surrendered by General Hull in August, 1812. For some reason he incurred the suspicion of Colonel Procter, by whom in February, 1813, he was ordered to leave the territory. He set out for New York, but en route thither was seized by the British military authorities and subjected to a long confinement in Quebec under suspicion, apparently, that he was still a British subject who was harboring treasonable designs. In the spring of 1814 he was released, and going to Washington, he petitioned for an advance of pay for his service as marshall of Michigan from 1806 to 1811, to enable him to return to his home. On April 2, 1814, he was appointed garrison-surgeon's mate in Detroit. He was dismissed, December 12, following, and died a few months later. No record of the date of his death has been found, save a bill against his estate dated June 18, 1815. His widow married (second) Melvin Dorr; she was buried from Ste. Anne's Church, Aug. 1, 1825. See Farmer, *Hist. of Detroit, passim*; *Proc. of Land Board of Detroit, passim*; Burton, *Journal of the Board of Trustees of Detroit, passim*; *Mich. Pio. Colls., passim*, especially XV, 406; and mss. among the Solomon Sibley papers.

know it would be the greatest reflection on my Character to make use of Mess^{rs} T & M^cGills places for my private purpose & I dare say would soon be known to them. Whoever would hire the Houses would want the Lots belonging to them, for no man would wish to go thru an Other persons potatoe Lot to get in Or Out of his House. These are matters I'm sure did not Occur to M^r Brush when he Allowed Doc^r Scott to plow & I suppose he also thought the Houses were in so bad Order that no One would hire them. Let that be the case or not, as they do not belong to me I must keep them free in case Tenants should Offer. please Explain this matter to M^r Brush so that nothing further may be done to these Houses or Lots. I Owe Cadiou four Dollars Answer so much for him at the Vendue. I wanted to see you last night to know what you had bought & how things sold. come Over this Evening. Our best wishes to M^r Brush Allice & Dear Edmund

Your Tender Father
John Askin

COLLECTION OF DEBTS IN VINCENNES

Near Sandwich April 30th 1804

Dear Henry, God be praised my Family & self have weathered an other Winter, & enjoy good health a like blessing we sincerely wish may be the portion of you and yours

M^r Fraser has not as yet made up the Accounts & delivered them with the Books to M^r Brush but promises shortly to do it which I believe he will be able to do his Health being some thing better & as he has Vandued all off and lives now at M^r Mays he has leasure time to settle all his affairs. M^r William Mackintosh writes me as I believe I before wrote you that he had sued M^r Vigoe but owing to a want of Judges there was no Court at Post Vincent last March. In his last letter he mentions Mons^r Vigoe means to defend by saying he made several payments which he will prove. how little proof will be rec^d in that Country provided it keeps a British Subject out of his right in money matters, I'm convinced of, Yet I dont mean to throw reflections on the

whole, but what can a few upright men do among so many of a different cast. in short I have so little prospect of success in that or any other trial by Jury at Post Vincent where one of the parties is a Citizen & the other a British Subject that I never would try the issue if I could help it and I have now a suit of my own depending where a Gentlemen of the Post owed me a sum of money for which three Notes were given payable in as many Years two of which were regularly paid but as the third was not I after two years directed it to be sued for and there is now a defence set up that I have already in the two Notes that are already paid received more than was ever due me and that it could be proven from this you may conclude that let the instrumen[t] be what it will, the Lawyers of that Country undertake to set it aside and so feared am I of their success that im now trying by fair and gentle means to get to pay me rather than trust to determination of the Court and Jury. for these very Good reasons in my oppinion I have desired M^r Brush to write Mons^r Vigoe to know how much he will give in Order to have the suit withdrawn and a full acquitance given on account of the late Williams & Casity I think you wrote me you would take £1000, N. Y Currency at the expiration of two years on that Sum being well secured

I have only to add that I remain Dear Henry

Your constant Friend

M^r Alexander Henry at Montreal

Addressed: Near Sandwich April 30th, 1804. John Askin Senior to M^r Alex^r Henry, Merch^t, Montreal (Copy)

INDEBTEDNESS OF FRANCIS VIGO⁵⁰

Proche de Sandwich le 12 Mai 1804

Mons^r Vigoe

Mons^r Je suis extrament mortifie d'apprendre par une lettre que Mons^r William Mackintosh M'Ecrie que votre concelle L'Avocat General a dit que vous mavez payé plus que vous me deviez jamais et que je vous ai triché. Que je ne vous ai jamais triché ni aucune autre homme sur

⁵⁰ From the original manuscript in the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

terre est la Verité, et je crois ce L'oppinion de tout honnette homme qui me connoit, Mons^r L'Avocat General a pris bien de liberté sans me connoitre mais je suis flatté d'apprendre que vous dite qu'il na pas eu votre autorité pour parler de la facon. Je n'ai jamais manque une occasion de vous servir soit avec la companie ou dans nos affaires propre. La dernier fois quand vous etiez chez moi et que votre Billett etoit due plus qu'un ans alors je ne voulois pas vous arreter ni vous faire la paine, malgré le grand besoin que j'avois alors d'argent, Je ne voulois pas suivre le conceille de vous faire prendre et assurer mon argent, je demande seulement que vous agisé avec moi comme j'ai fais avec vous, Si vous supposiez qu'il y Eu d'Error dans nos compte pourquoi pas m'a L'avoit dit quand vous etiez ici et je vous aurai fait voir clairement le contraire ayant les ventes chez moi de tous les peltrie que j'ai envoyé a Londres et d'autre preuf que tout ce que je vous aie porté au compte etoit juste. Croyez Moi n'Opposez jamais rien contre le paiement de billett que vous avez faite, ce paroitra mal dans une Cour de justice et au meme temps vous ne réeussirez pas ils faut que les obligations (qu'il ne soit pas obtenue per surprise ou force) soit payé tot ou tard. J'ai le moyent encore de vous servir d'une affaire de beaucoup plus de consequence que tout ce que vous me devez. La dette que vous dever a Mess^{rs} William et Cassety est entre les mains de mon gendre Mons^r Brush et Moi avec autorité de faire payer tout la somme si vous avez autant ou de vous acquitter pour Moins. Mons^r Fraser n'a plu rien à faire avec vous pour cette affair la. Vous dit avoir fais une paiement considerable à Mess^{rs} William et Cassety per la vois de la companie de Miamis. comme j'ai les Livres de compte de cette companie, Je serai capable et disposé de prouver tout ce que vous avez payé. Ce n'est pas commune qu'un person Avec qui est en proces, donne une avis à son adversaire, Mais comme Dieu Merci Je nai pas aucune rancune. Je vous donnerai la miens. Faites une offre Honorable et juste à la companie de Miamis, Aussi biens que pour ce que vous devez à Mons^r William et Cassety et je employerai mon Interest pour mettre fins a tout vos proces sans la quelle vous n'aurez jamais la Paix et tranqilleté tant que

vous Viverez sur terre, Nayant rien autre chose à vous
marquer Je suis Mons^r

Votre tres humble Serviteur

Endorsed: Proche de Sandwich le 12 de Mai 1804 John
Askin to Mons^r Vigoe. Copie

Translation

Near Sandwich, May 12, 1804

Mr. Vigo

Sir: I was extremely annoyed to learn by a letter from Mr. William McIntosh that your counsel, the Attorney-General, says that you have paid me more than you ever owed me and that I have tricked you. I have never tricked you nor any other man on earth, and every honest person who knows me will say the same, I am sure.

The Attorney-General took a great liberty with my character since he has no acquaintance with me, but I am glad that he does not have your sanction in the matter. I have never let a chance slip of serving you, either with the Miamis Company or in our own private affairs. The last time you were here, when your note had been overdue more than a year then, I would not have you arrested, nor cause you any inconvenience, in spite of my great need of funds. I would not take the advice to have you prosecuted to secure payment. All I ask is that you should do the same by me. If you thought there were errors in our accounts, why did you not say so when you were here and I could have shown you the contrary, absolutely, having in my house all bills of sales of peltries sent to London, as well as other proofs that everything I had charged you with was correct.

Believe me, one should never make trouble about paying one's note. It looks bad in court and at the same time never has any effect. Debts must be paid sooner or later, or payment will be enforced in some way. There is an affair on right now of much more consequence than all you owe me in which I could help you. Your debt to Messrs. Williams & Casety is in the hands of my son-in-law, Mr. Brush, and myself, for collection, with authority to

enforce payment of the whole sum, if you have it, or to let you off with less. Mr. Fraser has nothing more to do with it. You state that you have paid Messrs. Williams & Casety a considerable sum through the Miamis Company.⁵¹ As I have the account books of that company, I shall be able and disposed to give you credit for all that you have paid. It is rather unusual to advise one's adversary in legal matters, but as God is merciful I have no spite against you and would show you mercy. Make an honorable and just offer to the Miamis Company, also as much as you can for what you owe Messrs. Williams & Casety, and I shall use my influence in putting an end to all your lawsuits, otherwise you will never have any peace or comfort while you live on this earth. Having nothing further to communicate, I remain, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

Endorsed: Near Sandwich, May 12, 1804. John Askin to Mr. Vigo. Copy.

TRADE CONDITIONS AT MACKINAC

Michilimackinac, 30^h May 1804

Dear Askin. Your esteemed favour of the 11^h Ins^t I had the pleasur of receiving some days ago. After an interruption of more than Six months, I am very happy to learn that you & family are well. I am at a loss for words to express my gratitude to you & family, for your kind wishes for my happiness & wellfaer. &c. We have nothing new at this place. After a Short Sickness, we lost M^r Matthew Henry⁵² on the 29th March, much regretted. The winter here was mild & the Spring early. The few traders who are Arrived

⁵¹ On the subject of the affairs of the Detroit firm of Williams and Casety, here alluded to, see *B. H. R.*, I, 185; also document printed *post*, 431-34.

⁵² Matthew Henry was a brother of James Henry for whom see *ante*, 305. William, cousin of James and Matthew, had been serving as Mackinac agent of Major O'Hara, army contractor. When O'Hara withdrew from the contracting business in 1800, he was succeeded by Wilson and Ormsby. William Henry continued in their employ at Mackinac until the autumn of 1801, when he returned to his home in Lancaster, Pa. His place as agent at Mackinac was taken by his cousin, Matthew, who arrived from Detroit on Sept. 2, 1801. He continued at Mackinac in the employ of Wilson and Ormsby until his death, here noted, March 29, 1804. Writing to James Hopkins on Feb. 16, 1810, James Henry gave the date of Matthew's death as May 28, 1804. Henry papers in B. H. Coll., *passim*.

from the Grand river, &c, Gives a very poor Acc^t of the trade in that part of the Count[r]y.

In the *Wilkinson* came a few Adventurers, with Flour, Corn, Whiskey, Pork, &c. &c. I am told that Flour is Sold at 5 Dollars, but as yet there is very little demand for those Articles. I am told that Sugar will be plenty.

As to my hea[l]th, I have not been able to Stir from my Own House all the winter, from the Rheumatesm & a weakness in my limbs. I am doing all I can to wind up & Settle my Small Affairs, in Order to leave this Country.

My best respects waits on Madam Askin & all your family. And am Sincerely. Dear Sir,

Your Very Humble Sev^t

Charles Morrison

John Askin Esqu^r

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Near Sandwich.

Endorsed: Mich. May 30^h 1804 M^r Charles Morrison to Jn^o Askin recv^d June 7^h Answ^d y^e 22^d

INDEBTEDNESS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Poste Viennenes, le 9 Juin 1804

M^r Askin Je Reçû Vos Deux Laitres dattée du 12 May 1804. Vous Me paraissé bien Mortifié de ce que mon avoca a dit de Vous, mais Jespairo que Vous ne prenderé pas en Consideration Ce que un avoca peut avoir dit ou ce quil dira Sée Messieurs Emploie tous ce qu'il est en Leurs pouvoire pour L'intairais de Leurs Clyens. Vous me demendé pourquoi Lorsque Jetais Chévous je ne vous ay pas Dit qu'il y avais de Lerreur dans nos Comptes. Je vous protaiste que ne L'é jamais panssé, et ay toujours Cruéu vos comptes juste, mais Vous Connaissé ma faiblese et mon Caractaire Vous ni nioré poin que je ne Seé nit Lire nit Ecrire et que Je ne puis me Rendre Compte moy même, la confience que Jé toujours uêu den toute les personnes avec qui Je fais des affaire, et particullierment En Vous a fait que Je né Jamais Employé personne pour la Verification de Mes Comptes, toute personne Son Sujet a Sce tronpé trais posibles que Cela Vous Soit arrivé comme a une autre, Cit

Cela Est Soyé persuadé que Je vous Ren trop de Justisce pour penssé que vous L'ayée fait de gaité de Coeur.

Pour me Justifié d'un démenti qui ma été donné par M^r W^m McKintosh en presence detoute la Cour au Sujet d'une Laitre que Javais Reçû de la C^o des Mits en 90 par M^r Abbot par la quel Vous Manonssiée M^r parque et vous, que la C^o avais divissé les daite de Voibache quil etoiet duèu ala dit C^o que ma daite Etoiet tonbée a M^r abbot que Je navais affaire qua lui, Je fut obligé de declaré ala Court Sou Sairment la Verité, M^r McKintosh ma dit que Je navais Jamais Reçû de pareil Laitre, ensorte En Chairchant Cette Laittre Javais Rassemblé tous les papié Consernent nos affaire dans une Luiase San panssé en faire aucune usage;

M^r Dubois avais promis de Vous payé labalance au prentems M^r McKintosh en paraissai satisfait. M^r Dubois devais avan Son Départ pour la chute faire Son Billiet a M^r McKintosh en votre faveur, Mais Infortunément il la totalment oublyé et est parti sans Lefaire, Le lendemain M^r McKintosh ma envoyé son avoca me demandé le payment quil lui falais ymediatment Cinq Cents piastres pour Vos affaire yci, Je lui fit Réponse que Je navais pas dargent, que Je le pryais d'atendre le Retour de M^r Dubois quil payeroiet que Javais prit des arangement avec lui pour Cela, que Sit M^r Dubois navais pas passé Ché lui que Cela Etoiet un oubli aussitos Son Retour Laffaire Sarenjerai, pour toute Satisfaction le landemin Je Reçû une prise de Corps alors Je fut obligé d'employé un avoca et Lui Remaitre tous les papié Consernent nos affaire, Jé Seû aprais qu'il y avais trouvé une herreure Considerable, Considairé Monsieur que L'objet de M^r McKintosh nest pas que Vous Recevié de largent au detroit mais Bien de faire Vandre les biens des peuvres débiteurs Les Ruiné pour Son Intairais particulier, pour preuve de Cela il a fait Vandre une tairre dans la prairie denbas par Jugement Sit Jene mit Etoiet pas trouvé elle naurais pas payé les frais de Court &c. Je L'é poussée moy même Jusque a Cinquante piastres, et il la uèu pour Cinquante Cinq, Ce qui fait plus de Cent pour Cent audessous de Sa Valleur, demaniere que le debiteur Est Ruiné et toujours En daite et le Créanssier ne Reçoit Rien, quand a Laffaire de M^r Cassety M^r McKintosh man a parlé il y a

Environ deux ans que Sit Je Voulais il allais au detroit il arranjerais Cette affaire pour moy que Je navais qualui faire mes proposition qu'il les presenterais a Sée Messieurs, Je lui fit Voire une Laitre de M^r Cassety par laquel il Confaissai davoir Reçû une Certene quantité de pelterie quil Envairais le Castore en Canada alorse Je lui offre pour payment de la Balance de 2000 acre de terres, ou M^r McKinroche ma dit que Cela Etoiet fort Genereux et que Cetoiet Même trop, Ebien Je par ma lil dit je né nul doubt Daranje cette affaire, Efectivement a Son Retour il ma dit qu'il avais fait ma proposition et que Sée Messieurs Lacceptais quelque tems aprais nous allame de C^o Voire Les Cinq Lot de 400 acres Sur Sept quil me Raistoiet, Je né Reçû de ce moment aucune Satisfaction pour Cette affaire Sinon une prise de Corps, don Le procès comencéra a la Court de 7^{bre} prochain aussibien que le Votre, Je né Jamais Rufussé de payé aucun Compte et Billiet qui mon Eté présenté ou Je les ay payé imediatment ou Jé prit avec les personnes des aranjement pour cela et Je met au defit le plus Intrépide de tous les hommes de me Convaincre du Contraire de Cette Verité. Je ne Jamais depuis 29 ans que Jé fait des affaires uêu de prossée avec personne Ce Son Les deux premiers, et il a falut pour cela que cela Soit entre les mains de M^r McKintoche qui a Juré Ma Ruine totale en presence de cés deux Compagnion de Voyage, don M^r J^{bste} Laplante En Etoiet un, Vous Voyé M^r quil mais Inposible de prendre des aranjement avec une homme qui chairche a manentire, quand aux ofre Genereuse de Cervisee que Vous Mofré il Me Son tres agréable, Je vous en prie faitte tous Ce quil cera en Votre pouvoire étan étant tres persuadé que Vous pouvé beaucoupt quil ne depan que de Vous pour me donné la tranquillité, de mon Coté Je feré tous les sacrifisce posible pour Maitre fin a des affaires aussit Enbroullée, Je Suit Lenemit Juré des procès Je pense que un Mauvais arrenjement Veauderais mieux que tous les melieurs proces. Je Vous auré une éternelle Reconnaissance pour tous ce que Vous fera pour moy. Javais Intention daller dans le Missouri Cette autone Jetoiet Certan d'un Bon Succais par les Connaissance que J'i ais et la fassilité davoir un permit. Mais Coment pouraye Mazardé a demandé des Marchandise Sachan que Jé deux

procais Sur les Bras toutes personnes ne Son pas obligé de Sçavoir que Jé fait tous Ce qu'il Etoiet En mon pouvoir pour les Evité, pourten Je ne Cerais pas en paine d'avoire de merchandise mais ma delicatese menpaiche de les accepté. Vous Voyé M^r Combien il Est danjereux d'avoire des ajans Vendicatif Car Sit Ce navais pas Eté pour me faire du Mal Sans vous fair de bien il aurais Celon ma pryere attendu quelque Jours le Retour de M^r Dubois Vous aurié Eté payé Moy tranquil Je naurais Jamais panssé a Regardé Sit il y avais de Laireure Entre Vous Et Moy. La preuve est que le Landemain du Retour de M^r Dubois il a Eté Ché M^r McKintoch aven même que de Venire Ché moy Lui afrire de Renplire La promesse qu'il Lui avais faite En Sexcusent de Lavoire oublié En parten, M^r McKintoch Lui a dit qu'il netes plus tems. Rien de plus a Vous Entretenire. Jé L'honneur daitre avec Consideration Monsieur

Votre tres henbles et tres obeissent Serviteur

Vigo

Addressed: A Monsieur Jhon Askin S^{qure} au Detroit

Endorsed: Post Vincent June 9^h 1804 Mons^r Vigoe à Jn^o Askin recu Le 23 Aout wrote him 5. Nov^r 1804

Translation

Vincennes, June 9, 1804

Mr. Askin: I received your two letters dated May 12, 1804. You seem much vexed at what my lawyer has said about you, but surely you do not take seriously anything that a lawyer may have said or that he is likely to say. These men use every means in their power for the interest of their clients.

You ask why I did not mention the error in our accounts when I was with you. I swear I never thought of it and that I have always trusted you that they were all right. You know me, my frailties and my disposition. You will not deny that I can neither read nor write and that I cannot make up my accounts myself. Because of the confidence that I have always had in the people with whom I did business, and especially in you, I have never employed any one

to verify my accounts, but all men are liable to make mistakes and it is not impossible that this should happen to you as to any other man. If it is the case, be assured that in justice to you I could never think you did it purposely.

In open court Mr. William McIntosh accused me of lying when I testified under oath that he had told me that I never received the letter that you and Mr. Park said I had, written by Mr. Abbott for the Miamis Company, in 1790, stating that the company⁵³ had divided up its Wabash debts and that what I owed was to be paid to him and that I had nothing to do with any other person. Therefore, to justify myself I made a search for that letter and put all the papers relating to our affairs into one package but with no thought of using them.

Mr. Dubois had promised to pay you the balance in the spring and Mr. McIntosh seemed satisfied with that, but before his departure for the falls, Mr. Dubois was to give Mr. McIntosh his note in your favor. Unfortunately, Mr. Dubois forgot this entirely and left without doing it. The next day Mr. McIntosh sent his lawyer to me demanding payment, saying that he needed 500 piastres immediately for your business at this place. I replied that I did not have the money, that I would pay him upon the return of Mr. Dubois with whom I had arranged for payment, and that if Mr. Dubois had not gone by his place it was because he had forgotten, but that as soon as he returned, everything would be arranged satisfactorily.

The next day I was served with a writ of habeas corpus, and was then obliged to employ a lawyer and to place in his hands all the papers relative to our business. Afterwards I learned that he had found a mistake of some magnitude. But consider, Sir, the object of Mr. McIntosh. It was not that you should receive money in Detroit, but for the sole purpose of having the property of poor debtors auctioned off and themselves ruined for his own interest. Here is a proof of this. He had a tract of land in the lower meadow put up for the judgment obtained. If I had not happened to be there, it would not have brought the ex-

⁵³ On the division of debts due the Miamis Company, here alluded to, see *B. H. R.*, I, 325 ff.

penses of the suit. I bid for it myself up to 50 piastres and he got it for 55, more than one hundred per cent less than its value. In that way the debtor is ruined and the creditor gets nothing.

With respect to my business with Mr. Cassety, Mr. McIntosh told me about two years ago that he was going to Detroit and if I wished he would settle it for me, that I had only to make him an offer and he would present it to the gentlemen there. I showed him a letter from Mr. Cassety in which he acknowledged the receipt of a certain quantity of peltry, adding that he was going to send the beaver to Canada. I then offered 2000 acres of land to pay the balance, which Mr. McIntosh said was very generous and even too much. "Oh, well," he said to me, "I'm going up and have no doubt but that I shall settle it all right." On his return he told me that he had presented my offer to the gentlemen and they had accepted it. Some time after, we went together to look over the five lots of 400 acres by 7 that remained to me. From that day I have had nothing in settlement of that business except a writ of habeas corpus for which the suit begins next September, the same time as yours.

I have never refused to pay any account or note presented to me. Either I have paid it immediately or I have arranged for the payment, and I defy the most daring man on earth to convict me of the contrary. In the 29 years that I have been in trade I have never had a suit with any man. These are the first two, and it was necessary for them that the business should be in the hands of Mr. McIntosh, who has sworn my total ruin in presence of two traveling companions, one of them being Mr. Jean Baptiste Laplante.

You see, Sir, how impossible it has been for me to come to any terms with a man who seeks only to destroy me. Your generous offer of aid is most acceptable, and I beg you to do all in your power, being fully persuaded that you can do much and that my only dependence is in you for any peace of mind. On my part, I shall make any sacrifice to put an end to such a tangled state of affairs. I am the sworn enemy of litigation. Better far is a bad bargain than the most favorable lawsuit. I shall be eternally grateful to you for anything you may do to help me.

It was my intention to go into the Missouri Country this fall where I was sure of good trade from my knowledge of the country and the freedom in the matter of a license. But how can I venture to ask for goods with two lawsuits on my hands? Every one may not know that I did all in my power to avoid trouble. However, there would be no difficulty in getting goods. The fact is, I am scrupulous about accepting them.

You see, Sir, how ruinous it is to have spiteful agents. If this one had not wanted to do me harm without doing you any good, he would have waited for the return of Mr. Dubois, as I begged him to do. You would have been paid, myself at ease, and I should never have thought to look if there were any errors in our accounts. In proof of this, the day after Mr. Dubois returned, even before coming to see me, he went to Mr. McIntosh and offered to fulfill the promise he had made, apologizing for his forgetfulness when he left. Mr. McIntosh told him it was too late.

With nothing more of interest to you, I have the honor to remain respectfully, Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

Vigo

AFFAIRS OF ISAAC TODD

Montreal 20th July 1804

My dear friend On my return from N. York I found your favors of the 29^h Jan^y & 27^h febr^y [since] which Malincholly events has prevented my Answering. I found my friend M^r M^cTavish in a bad State of health which occasioned My being much with him & his famely he departed this Life the 6th Ins^t his Loss will be felt by his famely, his friends & his Country he has Left a Large fortune part of which is disposed of much to his honor he has Left £1000 to the Commod^{ro} Son.⁵⁴ as I am One of his Executors & the perticular friend of his disconsolate Wife, occasions my attention & many painfull scenes. and to add to this, I buried on the 15th a favorite House keeper after a painfull

⁵⁴ Alexander Grant, for whom see *ante*, 21.

Complaint, which Terminated in a Consumption She was only 31 Years Old Lived with me near 10 Years & was Mother to a Little Girl that Calls me and truly her father I acknowledge her as Such I before the Mothers death took her to Quebec to place her under the Care of [a] respectable Woman who teaches School she costs me £100 Pr Annum her Mother has Left two other Daughters by her Husband, James Kyle who has Lived with me 12 Years. poor Woman she was unhappy fearing these Children might be Neglected as their father is a Young Man and may Marry again I promised I would take care of them. I have done so Leaving in the hands of Trustees £1000 for each the Interest to Educate them, the principal to be paid on their being of Age, or Marrying with the Consent of the Trustees, if One dies to [the] other to Inherite her Share, I know of no use Money is but to do good, and to enable me to assist others I with pleasure deprive my Self of comforts I could enjoy. those Events my Good friend have depressed my Spirits Much & even injures my health, and as Montreal will now be Much Changed to me I may probably take a Trip to England this fall or winter at Quebec. we must endeavour to do our duty while we Live. I have seen some of the Passengers by the Fleet who says that Miserable Man W^m Robertson Lives such a shamefull Life as to be often found Lying in the Streets as no Coffee house nor Lodging will keep him Long & of course no decent man keep him Company. I know you will with me wonder that a Man such as he was can be so lost. I find you have got the debt owing by Roland [Ruland?] to My Nephew Secured. as I am often absent Mr M^oGill will Give you instructions respecting our Joint Lands I have only to wish you would Send me from the Orriginal Schedule a Note of the Lots Sold or exchanged & what remains to be paid of the purchas. is there no demands for the property at River Raisin? I am extremely grieved to hear of the Conduct of Cap^t M^oKee on Account of his Good Wife her fate has not been such as she deserved. we must be resigned to meet with Trouble which God inable us to bear my mind is not yet recovered from the Late events so as to say much on business Rememb^r me kindly

to M^{rs} Askin & all Your famely God Bless you all &
beleve me

Your Sinc[e]re friend
Isaac Todd

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane Detroit favor R.
Hamilton Esq^f

Endorsed: Montreal July 20th 1804 Isaac Todd Esq^r
to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 21st & Answ^d y^e 29^h Aug^t

TUITION OF ALEXANDER ASKIN

Detroit August 8th 1804

Dear Sir I have enclosed the Acc^t of Mas^r Alick's⁵⁵ Schooling from The first time of his commencement to the 5th of August and have given Credit for all the Money that I received, the Price of one thousand of Bricks which I have had Received by Your order from John Shaw I don't know therefore You'll be pleasd to deduct it. And as I am under the Necessity of paying a large Sum of Money I would consider it a great favour if you would be Pleased to Send me the Balance. I am certain that I have not the least doubt of your good inclination of serving me in my distress and on my part I conceive & think that I have discharged my duty faithfully for I am not ashamed of the progress that Mas^r Alick has made while under my care & Tuition and be assured Sir, that I will not be in the least slack or Remiss in advancing him in every degree to the utmost in my power Mas^r Alick has a pretty collection of Books, but unhappily lost his Grammar which is the Key & Instrument to all the Authors. Perhaps you could procure him one Soon. I hope you will be so kind [as] to Inform me if I have any prospect of receiving that Small debt that the late Doctor Harffy owed me

⁵⁵ Alexander David, the youngest son of John Askin, was born, Feb. 22, 1791. He died in early manhood, apparently toward the close of 1815. For several years following the family's removal to Strabane, Alexander attended school in Detroit. He subsequently read law with his brother-in-law, Elijah Brush. If family estimates may be trusted, he was a youth of much natural ability, who never really applied himself. He was present at the surrender of Detroit, in 1812, as a lieutenant of the Flank Company, Second Essex Militia Regiment; the following year he is listed as a lieutenant of the Troop of Provincial Royal Artillery Drivers. See Askin papers *passim*; and Irving, *op. cit.*, 40, 91.

Dear Sir, with best respects & sincere Compliments to you & Worthy family I remain your very humble & obedient Servant

Matthew Donovan

Endorsed: Detroit Aug^t 8^h 1804 Mr Mathew Donnovan to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 9^h

DEATH OF SIMON McTAVISH

Queenston August 10th 1804

Dear Sir After a very pleasant Jaunt to the Lower Province, I got home three days ago. I had the pleasure to find my family in perfect health, nor have I as yet perceived that the Bussiness had been [illegible] by my Absence. At Montreal I found most of our old freinds well & hearty. Unfortunately during our stay there, the Society suffered a very serious Loss in Mr McTavish. Full of health & spirits last year, he had projected to build a most Magnificent house in the Vicinity of Montreal. With a Man of Mr McTavishs enterprize the Execution of the Plan followed the project very close. He had it founded in the Fall, & early this spring on superintending the Work, he got a severe cold which being at first neglected, soon became serious, & when too late was found past the power of medecine to remove. His death caused a Sensation not only in Montreal, but through the Whole Province, which I will not Attempt to describe. He has left a very large Fortune very [illegible] by Will to his family, relations, & freinds. Some of the particulars are said to be as follows,—to his Widow 1200 a Year, his Second Son £20000, to each of two daughters 10,000, to a nefew not a partner £5000, to each of the others £1000, as allready well provided for. to the Sisters & Gray Nuns £1000 each in Charity, to a Son of his old Freind Mr Frobisher £5000, to finish the Education of our freind the Comodores Son £1000, and many others equally well Selected, to the Amount tis supposed of half his fortune The Residue supposed £50-or 60 thousand pounds to his eldest Son. I have been thus particular as you Well knew the Man, & will as much as any body be sensible of the Loss the Country has sustaind. Our Worthy freind Mr Todd is

one of the Executors to this Will, and was much Occupied by his Attention to him on his death bed. We found him however freindly and kind as ever. He begins to find old Age creeping on, but still must be going about. He projects spending this Winter in Quebec, & half promises us a Visit in the spring. M^r M^cGill we found in perfect health. To me he appeared as Young as he was Twenty Years ago. In a very comodious Country house, about a Mile from Town, with a most excellent Garden, he seems to possess and to enjoy as much Comfort, as generally falls to the Lott of humanity. His Brother Andrew has lately taken to himself a Young Wife, and seems of course perfectly happy. We found your old freinds A. Henry & W^m Lindsay in partnership in a Commission & Vendue bussiness, seemingly doing Well, & kind in their Enquires after You & Yours.

We spent a Week in Quebec with many old and kind freinds, and completed our tour in Six Weeks very much to our Satisfaction.

I found your last kind letter on my desk on my return. It gave me much satisfaction to learn that all [illegible] with You. I brought up a large English packet which I got at Quebec from Sir G. Pounal it Accompanies this, & I hope gives you good Accounts of your freinds at home, which I shall be very glad to learn. Of our freind W. R. the last accounts are Miserable beyond description. Lost to every sence of Shame, his Conduct would disgrace the lowest Member of the lowest class of Society.

M^{rs} Hamilton requests to Join me in best respects to M^{rs} Askin & in best Wishes for you & all yours. I ever am Dear Sir

Yours very sincerely

R. Hamilton

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Merchant near Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Aug^t 10^h 1804 Rob^t Hamilton Esq^r to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 28^h & Answ^d y^e 4^h sept^r

BURTON HISTORICAL RECORDS

TUITION OF ALEXANDER ASKIN

Colonel John Askin

To Matthew Donovan D^r

To the Tuition of his Son Mas ^r Alexander Askin from the 5 th of May 1802 to the 5 th of August 1804 Being 2 Years & 3 Months at 16 Shillings	£	s	d
P ^r Month.....N. Y. Currency	21	12	0
C ^r by 10 Dollars Rec ^d by Mas ^r Alexander in Septem ^r 1802.....	4	0	0
by a Bank Bill Rec ^d of M ^r Brush in July 1804..	4	0	0
	<hr/>		
	8	0	0

By 1 Thousand of Bricks Rec ^d by Your order of John Shaw.....	13	12	0
I dont know the price, you'll be pleas'd to deduct it.....	3	—	—
	<hr/>		

Ent^d Aug^t 24th 1804 £10["] 12["] -

Rec^d of John Askin the Balance of the within amount
being ten pounds twelv[e] Shillings. Detroit Aug^t 14, 1804.
Matthew Donovan

paid out of [illegible] see M^r Brushes statem^t

Endorsed: Aug^t 14^h 1806 [1804] M^r Mathew Donovans
receipt in full £10["] 12

AFFAIRS OF WILLIAM ROBERTSON

Strabane Aug^t 17th 1804

Dear W^m Your letter dated the 14th of last month reached
me the 9th ins^t and I assure you it allways gives us pleasure
to hear from you or John however I do not mean from
that to exact such a correspondence as would take you or
him from your necessary bussiness but when at leisure a
few lines will always be pleasing and particularly so when
any change takes place that may effect either of you.

Respecting the conduct of your Uncle W^m Robertson for
some time past no real idea can be formed of what he
means or I rather think what he does has no meaning he

has sums Due him where he does not call for them or make any enquiry about them and he protests bills drawn on him for money due agreeable to an account current and letter both in his own hand writing. I consider him an honest worthy friendly good man, who has got a Strong fever or something which operates as such and untill that fit gets over if ever it does not [no] great consistency in action can be expected. however my advice to you as his Nephew and agent is to continue doing all you can for his interest, which advice is I dare say needless to you who have so great an inclination to serve him, and as to what he may write for the present little stress can be laid on it. I Should think the letter he wrote Mess^{rs} Parker Gerard & Ogilvie & C^o will authorize them to charge him £2000 Hf^x advance[d to] you and I'm persuaded in his real senses he never intended to withdraw that credit, therefore what he may now write you on that or any other subject should only guide your actions so far as you think them the same sentiments he would have expressed some years ago.

I think your Uncles agents should stop the sale of his houses for the ballance due the Commodore he now finds there are more drafts protested than he thought at first so that there must be above £300 Ster^a now due. the matter is easy done but how you or Charles or both rather are to undertake it without his concurrence and that I dare say he will not give you for the only reason as he may call it that he will not be drove to any thing, tho perfectly right and for his interest and credit. for my part was I his agent I would undertake the payment of the debt and tho he might blame me in his present state I'm sure he would thank me in future should he ever recover from his present situation. I dont believe Visgar will gain much if any thing from your Uncle by the suit he has instituted for Charles has found out the account of sales of his Peltries and after deducting the expences in Lower Canada very little if any thing will remain, and if there did I'm sure your Uncle David must have given [it] to him and taken no notice of it in the accounts otherwise M^r Visgar would not have been so long silent and made payments since.

Your Grand-mother had been unwell but is perfectly

recovered. I never have had my health better than this year but [have been] a little indisposed for some days past all the rest of the Family in perfect health as was Cap^t & M^{rs} Meredith with their Children in April last.

After the familys assurances of strong attachment to you and John I remain Dear W^m

Your affectionate Grand-father

M^r William Robertson Jun^r
Merchant Queenstown

Endorsed: Strabane Aug^t 17th 1804 John Askin to William Robertson Jun^r (Copy)

FROM ROBERT DICKSON TO JOHN ASKIN

Michilimackinac Aug^t 24 1804

Dear Sir As I am just setting out for the Mississippi and as I leave a young man to pass the Winter at this place, finding that you have a quantity of whisky for sale here, please direct to Patrick Adhemar⁵⁶ informing him of the lowest price and enclose an Order on Jaques Geasson with whom it is stored for what quantity he may want for which I will be accountable & remitt you the Amount next spring. My best respects to M^{rs} Askin & family, wishing the full enjoyment of health, I am Dear Sir,

Your very Obed^t & very hbl^e Servan^t

R. Dickson⁵⁷

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Detroit

Endorsed: Mich. Aug^t 24^h 1804 M^r Rob^t Dickson to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 2^d Nov^r wrote an Answ^r to Patrick Adhemar y^e 29

⁵⁶ Patrick Adh mar witnessed several marriages at Mackinac in the period 1792-99. Presumably he was a son or other connection of Toussaint Anthony Adh mar dit St. Martin (for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 177-78), but of this we have found no record. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIX, *passim*.

⁵⁷ Robert Dickson was one of a family of six sons and four daughters, children of a merchant of Dumfries, Scotland. The father suffered business reverses and possibly this was a factor in the migration of three of the sons, Robert, William, and Thomas, to Canada, where their cousin, Robert Hamilton, was established in business. William and Thomas located in the Niagara region and their careers are sketched in *B. H. R.*, I, 461 and 542. It is known that William Dickson came to Canada in 1784, and since Robert was the older brother, it seems probable that he came at the same time. From 1786 to 1788 he was at

FROM ROBERT NICHOL TO JOHN ASKIN

Fort Erie August 26 1804

My Dear Sir I have written you two or three times Since my return, but have not been favored with any of yours. the purport of the present is to inclose an Account of Sundry Articles, furnished by me on joint Adventure Account, & of 4 Barrels of Pork, furnished & forwarded P your own order the first Amounting to £250-6-0 & the latter to £28-16- New York Currency, both of which will I hope prove Correct. As the time is now fast approaching when my remittances must be made I trust I shall be excused for urging the propriety of Selling at any price which will Cover Cost & Charges, for I must remit. I however hope that, the greatest part if not the whole has been already disposed of & to Advantage. I have been So much disappointed in the Mackina and Detroit Markets, that I shall not be very forward to try them Again, thinking it better to sell at a Saving price at home, than to run great risks for the prospect of an uncertain Advantage.

The first of the English Goods arrived the other day at Queenstown but have not yet got this length. we may now Speedily Expect to be Constantly employed in the Forwarding line which will Keep us busy enough 'till the Close of the Navigation.

The *Saguinah* left this Some days ago with a load of Salt for Presqu'isle, by which she will not indeed gain Much, tho' it will help to pay her Current Expences. there will be another load ready for her when She returns, which Considering the Number of Vessels in Port, belonging to the owners of the Goods Coming up, & the little prospect of her getting any Chance freight, is the best manner in

Mackinac, serving as clerk and storekeeper in the Indian Department. The remainder of his life was passed in the Indian trade, chiefly of the Upper Mississippi region. There he acquired wide influence, particularly over the Sioux, one of whose women he married. This influence was largely decisive in allying the Indians of the region west of Lake Michigan with the British in the War of 1812. After that war the trade of the Minnesota region became progressively less prosperous for the British traders, and Dickson was on the point of withdrawing from it and establishing his family in the vicinity of his brothers at Niagara, when he died at Drummond Island in 1823. One of his sons, William Dickson, became a trader in the Red River region. Here he incited a half-breed rebellion in 1836, and two years later committed suicide. See *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, *passim*; article on Robert Dickson in *Minnesota History*, VI, 330-42; *Niagara Hist. Soc.*, pub., No. 30, pp. 19-21; and Quaife, *Wisconsin, Its History and Its People*, 333 ff.

which she can be employed. Should it be in my Power to give her any other Assistance in the freight it shall be most Cheerfully exerted. There is Some talk of the probability of Peace Speedily taking place in Europe, tho' I fear matters are not ripe enough for that Yet.

I request My regards to the Family, & am with the Sincerest Wishes for their joint & individual Welfare, My Dear Sir

Your friend & Serv^t

Rob^t Nichol

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane Near Sandwich

Endorsed: Fort Erie Aug^t 26^h 1804 M^r Rob^t Nichol to Jn^o Askin recv^d & Answ^d y^e 30^h Aug^t

FROM ROBERT NICHOL TO JOHN ASKIN

Fort Erie Septem^r 6 1804

John Askin Esq^r

My Dear Sir Your favors of the 22nd & 26^h Ult^o came duly to hand and are now before me, the first advising of your having Sent Six Dollars for the Purchase of a Lottery Ticket in the Neighbouring States, which sum I have received & shall dispose of as directed.

I am Sorry to See by yours of the 26^h the unfavorable situation of the small adventure, forwarded by me this Spring, particularly as I calculated on the Am^t of it to add to my fall remittances. Flour & Pork with us are almost the only payments we get for our Goods, at this place, & from them we must make our remittances. I however Still hope that Something will Come from that Quarter. If not I shall be greatly deficient. I am anxious if possible to avoid paying Interest in Montreal for it like a Cancer eats up all the profit.

I sent up no Flour in the *Saguinah*, 40 Barrels Per the *Lark* being all I forwarded this as directed I have Charged to your Account, at 50/. I have also Charged you with 6 Barrels more Pork at £7-4 del^d at Sandwich, agreeably to the inclosed Account, by which it appears you are indebted to me to the Sum of £17 8 New York Currency, which I think you will find right. there will then remain at

Mackina 14 Barrels of Pork which went forward in the *Saguinah* the freight on which to Mackina must be deducted from the Sales.

M^r Reynolds's Bill has been received, and is at your Credit. the Tea I Expect in about a fortnight. so soon as it arrives it shall be forwarded.

The *Saguinah* is now under Sailing orders having I suppose about 100 Barrels Bulk of Merchandise on board. there is no prospect of her getting more at present, I however hope that we may be able to do something better when she returns, at all events depend on my best Services.

I shall endeavour to do Something with Norton when more at leisure.

I am happy to hear that Captⁿ Meredith and Family were well, & shall always participate in the felicity of You & Yours. I beg my regards to the Family and am with the sincerest friendship My Dear Sir

Your Obed^t Serv^t

Rob^t Nichol

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane Near Sandwich

Endorsed: Sep^r 6^h 1804 M^r Rob^t Nichol to Jn^o Askin
recv^d y^e 17^h Answ^d y^e 19^h

AFFAIRS OF THOMAS WILLIAMS AND COMPANY

Montreal 18 September 1804

Elijah Brush Esq^r

Sir I received your favour of the 2^d & 13 Ultm^o respecting the business with Fraser & Williams⁵⁸ previous to the death of John Casity I received a power of Attorney from Mess^{rs} Murray & Sansom London, and M^r David White⁵⁹ the two principal Creditors of Tho^s Williams & C^o on my departure for Detroit M^r Cruickshank for himself & M^r Kay⁶⁰ approved of my settling their business also. on my

⁵⁸ John R. Williams, for whom see *ante*, 383-84.

⁵⁹ For the career of David White, see *B. H. R.*, I, 195.

⁶⁰ William and John Kay, brothers, were Montreal merchants engaged in the western fur trade in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. William was a member of the grand jury which indicted Lieutenant-Governor Henry Hamilton of Detroit in 1778. Another brother, Alexander, was a lieutenant in the Indian Department at Mackinac

arrival at Detroit I found the Estate in the Greatest confusion, no person interesting themselves for the Estate or Creditors, and it was with the consent of the Creditors at Detroit that M^{rs} Williams⁶¹ and M^{rs} Casety⁶² assign'd & made over the Estate to me in due form according to the custom of the country at that time there being no other mode of proceeding. a copy of this act I send you. on my leaving Detroit [I] did with the advice of the Creditors & my friends there appoint M^r Fraser my Attorney to act for me as long as I thought proper, and to revoke that power when I pleased. his procuring himself to be appointed Curator to the Estate afterwards⁶³ without the knowledge of the Creditors and particularly me must be considered and viewed by your Judges as done with intent to defraud and keep the Estate in his own Hands, and the appointment must be considered illegal, as the Estate was previously disposed of for the benefit of the Creditors, and put into my Hands. respecting Williams wishing to get the Estate into his Hands to dispute the demands of the Creditors, so many years admitted, is absurd. this plainly discovers his intent to defraud the Creditors, which your Judges must plainly see. M^{rs} Casety's assignment you will find I think registerd in the register at the same time as M^{rs} Williams. if M^r Williams would propose a certain sum and give security for the payment perhaps it would be as well, however his attempt to defraud us, ought to prevent him having any advantages. you mention that it would be best a number of the Creditors here would sign the power

during and after the Revolution, where he died about the year 1786. See *Mich. Pio. Colls.*, *passim*.

61 Mary Cecilia Campau, widow of Thomas, and mother of John R. Williams. She was the daughter of Jacques Campau and Catherine Menard, and was born at the Northeast Coast of Detroit, Sept. 11, 1764. She was married to Thomas Williams (for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 169) by Colonel Arent S. De Peyster on May 7, 1781. Williams died, Nov. 30, 1785, and on May 1, 1790, Mary Cecilia Campau married (second) in Sandwich, Jacques Lauzon, who was born at the Northeast Coast of Detroit, Dec. 13, 1760. They had eight children, born in the years 1791-1803. Mary Cecilia Campau was buried in Detroit on June 24, 1805. See Denissen, *op. cit.*

62 For the career of Mrs. Casety, *née* Therese Baby, see *B. H. R.*, I, 185.

63 There was no regular court in Detroit prior to the coming of Judge William Dummer Powell in 1789. For a careful account of the law and practice in Detroit with respect to the administration of estates in this period, see Riddell, *Michigan under British Rule*, *passim*, especially chap. x.

of attorney. you will observe I am the agent for the only creditors to any amount, the rest trifling both at Detroit & Elsewhere, M^r Cruickshank being the only one for a small sum, and he says the estate was already assigned to me by M^{rs} Williams, therefore I was the proper person to convey the power. re[s]pecting the amount of the balances due to the Creditors, M^r Fraser has the statment and in course will give it to you. should M^{rs} Casetys assignment not be found it cant be of any consequence as Tho^s Williams & C^o was John Casety, and at Williams death he continued the business without any settlement being made with the Creditors and he was greatly indebted to the estate of T Williams, the amount of the whole M^r Fraser if he pleases can give you information thereon I remain in hopes of hearing from you.

Your Most hum^e Serv^t

Alexander Henry

as Murray Sansom & C^o & David White are the only Creditors of any consequence, supose Williams would give me a sum I would acquit the Estate from these demands, and he would easily settle with the others, five hundred pounds York cash, exclusive of what you have in Hand will not be what it is worth, as Vigo owes 1700. besides 15 years Interest. A. H.

Endorsed: Letter To Elijah Brush Esq^r Detroit

Appended:

Copy

To all to whom these presents shall come I Cecille Campaux of Detroit send Greeting, whereas my deceasd Husband Thomas Williams of Detroit Merchant was at the time of his decease in company & joint partner with John Casety since deceased, when at the time of their Death and continue so to be at present indebted unto Alexander Henry Merchant of Montreal as Agent attorney for Murray Sansom & C^o of London and other Creditors, now know ye that I Cecille Compaux widow of the deceased Thomas Williams for and towards the payment and satisfaction of the said Debts and divers other good Causes and considerations me thereunto moving, have Granted assignd

bargaind & made over and by these presents do realy and absolutely grant and assign and make over all my r[i]ght Interest & Claim unto said Alexander Henry for the afore-said purposes all and in all manner of goods chatels debts, moneys, and all other things whether real or personal property of what kind or nature or quality soever in the state they are in at the time of my Husbands decease to have and to hold the same unto the said Alexander Henry his [h]eirs executors, administrators and assigns untill such Debts are paid and discharged in witness whereof I have hereunto set my Hand & Seal this el[e]venth day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred & eighty eight

sign'd Cecille veuve Tho^s Willians

Joseph Campau

W^m Monforton⁶⁴ Notary Public

registerd in the register of Detroit page 318 by me

Signd W^m Monforton NP.

FROM JOHN ASKIN TO ROBERT NICHOL

September the 19th 1804

Dear Robert, Your favour of the 6th reached me on the 17th I have enquired and find that M^r Reuff⁶⁵ will be the first person who goes for Michilimacinac by him I will give directions to have the Pork sold if it should only bring first cost freight & Duty so as you may have some payment and perhaps something may turn up so as to enable me to discharge the Ball^e I owe you though I do not as yet know of anything for certain. The Interest of that sum shall not fall on you at Montreal or elsewhere. As the *Saguinah* returns, I will put a few Barrells of Cider on Board sell them for what they will fetch & Credit me as the cider is made early it will not do to keep long though there is not a spoonful of watter in it. I missed Captain Cowan therefore you will take a Barrell of what I send for your own use.

⁶⁴ For sketch of the career of William Monforton, see *B. H. R.*, I, 107.

⁶⁵ Captain James Rough, for whom see *ante*, 258.

All well here and assure you of their best wishes, as Does
D^r Robert

Your Friend

P.S. If you can sell the Cider as you before mentioned at
6 Dollars I will perhaps be able to send you £100 worth

Endorsed: Sandwich Sep^r 19th 1804. John Askin
Sen^r to M^r Robert Nichol Merchant (Copy)

MISCONDUCT OF GABRIEL HUNOT

Sandw[i]ch 5 Oct^r 1804

M^r G Hounot⁶⁶

Sir your letter of the 23 March last is before me I have
a great deal to say to you but as you intend coming Nex
spring I shall mak a shorter letter than I intended Certainly
I had great reason to send M^r Smith or some other person
to look after my affairs in your hand when I found that you
did not hesitate to put my property into the hands of your
Creditors and involved me into Law sutes with them for
the sake of argement what would you or what would My
marchent say if I put my packs into the hand of a Man
that I was deeply Indebted to or even if I did ow[e] him
any thing the transaction had a bad apperance My
friends at Montreal has wrot me on this Subject and they
disaprue of your conduct and that you doo not Merit any
Incuragment I hope for the futer such mistakes will not
hapen I think that sending in Eight Men with 54 packs
was rather extravagant admitting that the adventure
could afourd it. I wish you to sell off all the goods on hand
the insuing spring if it was even to a Small disadvantage for
ready payment your Nephew requests me to inform you
that he delivered all the packs in good order Which was
certainly the case they wer[e] in perfect good condition
[illegible] said that you had 20 More packs which he
[illegible] had those packs you did exceedingly wron in not
sending them in As you Must know that 20 packs more
would have mad a great change of the face of the amount
My good[s] & many others are yet on the comunication

⁶⁶ An inventory of goods accompanying this document discloses that this was Gabriel
Hunot Sr.

consequently the assortment is by no means complete The scarcity of Cash in this countree is such that we are distressed for want of it Even Bills of Exchange will not comand it Therefore I would recomend it to you to arang with your Men for Merchandize and also to procure as much as would be wanted for silver works in great heast I am Sir your Most respectfull friend & humble Serv^t

Robert Gouie

M^r Gabriel Hounot New Madrid

P.S. Cap^t Peyroax will call on you for a few articles put up among the thing belonging to the adventure which you will be pleased to Deliver the Gentleman agreeable to his Invoice R G

have the goodness [illegible] pounds wight of Indigo Next Spring

Addressed: M^r Gabriel Hounot New Madrid

FROM ROBERT NICHOL TO JOHN ASKIN

Fort Erie October 19th 1804

My Dear Sir I wrote you a hasty letter the other day by Captain Gilkison, & have Since (say this morning) rec^d your letter of the 6th As the *Saguinah* is nearly full & will be ready to Sail this evening I think it best to be prepared for her departure.

I remark what you Say respecting the Amount due me. the disappointment to me tho' great, will not prove So much So as I at one time expected, having fortunately been able to realise property which I did not during the Summer & first of the fall Calculate upon. the Matter Sooner than you should be obliged to make a Sacrifice must lie over.

Your order for Milk of roses shall be attended to but I must Candidly Say, that I highly disapprove of all Cosmetics. they (the most innocent) are very dangerous, ruin the Constitution & not unfrequently occasion the death of those who use them. I shall apply to my Friend Doctor Walsh for a preparation which will I am sure be more safe & equally Efficacious.

I have forwarded by Captⁿ Fearson a Barrel of Timothy

seed cont^a 33 $\frac{3}{8}$ Bushels. out of this M^r Selby must have two Bushels. I shall forward on an Additional Quantity for yourself with a little for Captⁿ M^oKee, & the Clover Seed, which will be taken up by Captⁿ Mills's or some other vessel.

We have accounts from England to the 11th of August at which time nothing of moment had Occurred, it is however generally believed that Our present Ministry will not suffer the Energies & resources of the Nation to be consumed & dissipated in Idle Pomp & Parade. Expeditions are talkd of in the best informed Circles, & I think it not unlikely that we shall attempt in France, what Buonaparte has long boasted he would do in England. Notwithstanding the Servility & Abject State of the press in that Country it requires but little Sagacity to discover the general discontent & horror with which the daring Usurpation of the French Throne by a Sanguinary Tyrant is viewed by the great Mass of the People, & although Some might Consider my Ideas Extravagant, I will insist that if the Bourbon princes were to land in the West of France accompanied even by Such an Army as we Could Spare, M^r Buonaparte's power would soon totter to the foundation the great Mass of the people are from principle attached to the House of Bourbon & only require the presence of the princes of that House with an Army to Support them, to rally round them & assist in driving out the Wretches who have So long disgraced France by their Enormities.

We seem to look with great Confidence to an Offensive and Defensive Alliance with Russia & Sweden. Such a Measure by placing at our disposal a large & well discipl'd Army would very Soon restore the Ancient Government of France, & Consequently Adjust the Balance of Power on the Continent.

My time since the Arrival of the English Goods has been Constantly Employed without intermission & this is almost the only leisure day I have had these Two Months past. the season is now however fast approaching when I shall have rather more leisure than I wish for. Solitude is to me a most insupportable State, & was it not for the few Books

I possess, & now and then a visit from Some friends, I should die of Ennui.

It gives me great pleasure to Announce to you that Contrary to (I presume) all our most Sanguine Expectations the *Saguinah* sails with (or nearly) a full load. every Exertion has been used both by M^r Clark & myself to assist her & I am happy to think we have so well succeeded. On reviewing her transactions for the Season I think you may Calculate on a profit of £500, or 400 Pounds, no bad thing in these unfortunate times.

I rejoice to hear of the good health of your family My best wishes for a long Continuance of this invaluable gift are unceasing. I request My best regards to every individual of it & am with every Affectionate wish My Dear Sir

Your Sincere Friend & Most Faithful Serv^t

Rob^t Nichol

PS. I have seen a rule of the Detroit Court authorising M^r Warren to take the Evidence of M^r Douglas in a Cause in which Captⁿ Lee of the *Contractor* is defendant by giving *me* three days Notice. I have prevailed on M^r Warren to postpone the business untill I hear from M^r Brush who is his Attorney. If I should not write Mr B I will thank you to mention my wish to have his instructions. R N

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane Near Sandwich

Endorsed: Fort Erie Oct^r 19^h 1804 M^r Rob^t Nichol to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 30th Answ^d y^e 25^h Nov^r

DIFFICULTIES OF RICHARD POLLARD

Dear Sir I have been so Extremely ill, that I have been Oblidged to Keep the house, this Month; I thank God I am somewhat better, & shall endeavour to do duty to Morrow.

I Knew what would be our situation, for want of Church Wardens! no Kind of preparation or Assistance for the Holy Communion! no Attention About the hire of a Stove, Or Wood for the Winter; would a stranger who has seen this Country believe this? If I was well, I would look after these things myself. I am without a servant, &

cannot hire a man for any price. wishing you health, remain

Y^r Se

Octo 20 1804

R Pollard

Jn^o Askin Esq^r Sen^r Strabane

Addressed: Jn^o Askin Esq^r Sen^r Strabane

Endorsed: Oct^r 20^h 1804 the Rev^d Richard Pollard to
Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 28^h & Imediately Answ^d

DEBTS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Nov^r 5^h 1804

Dear sir Hearing that the Judge & M^r Jones⁶⁷ are to set off to morrow & not having learnt that any thing has yet been concluded between the latter & M^r William Mackintosh Either relative to The Miamis C^o matters or my private Acc^t with Mons^r Vigoe I'm apprehensive there may be some personal misunderstand[ing] between these Gentlemen if such should be the case, I beg you will this day E[n]quire of M^r Jones & let me know for it would be a great hardship on all the parties concerned whilst they Appear so disposed to settle on fair terms that it should not be done & if such is the case I'm sure they will have no Objections to meet M^r Jones & prove to him they mean nothing but what is fair & reasonable. I'm not just Authorised by them to say yet I'm pretty certain they have now no Objections to taking what M^r Vigoe proposed to give them (I think two years Ago) & give him a full Acquittance & that the property so recv^d being Lands Houses &^{ca} should

67 John Rice Jones was born in Marionethshire, Wales, Feb. 10, 1759. He was educated at Oxford, practiced law in London, and in 1784 migrated to Philadelphia. A year later he was in Kentucky serving with George Rogers Clark's expedition of that year against the Indians of the Wabash region. On withdrawing from Indiana, Clark left a garrison in Vincennes, and Jones remained in the capacity of commissary. He later became a friend and political ally of Governor Harrison, and held numerous offices of public trust. About the year 1809, he removed to Missouri, establishing his home in Ste. Genevieve. He was a member of the Missouri Constitutional Convention of 1819, and one of the first judges of the Missouri Supreme Court, holding this office until his death in 1824. His legal practice was extensive and his scholarship profound. He has been characterized as the most learned member of the Missouri Constitutional Convention, and "the greatest lawyer west of Ohio if not west of the Allegheny Mountains," in the decades 1790-1810. One of his sons, George Wallace Jones, was one of the first U. S. senators from Iowa; another son, John Rice Jones, was postmaster-general of the Texan Republic. Information adapted from Jacob P. Dunn, *Indiana and Indianians* (Chicago, 1919), I, *passim*; Houck, *History of Missouri*, III, 256-57; and Floyd C. Shoemaker, *Missouri's Struggle for Statehood, 1804-1821* (Jefferson City, 1916), 138-39, *et passim*.

be divided between M^r Jones & M^r M^oIntosh as Attornies to the two Parties in proportion to the Share the Executors of the late M^r James Abbott holds to that of the late Miamis C^o. This C^o have no Objections to M^r Mackin[t]osh settling their dividend in the Houses Lands &^{ca} to be recv^d of Mons^r Vigoe Agreeable to his Offer & I should suppose the Executors can have none to their Attorney M^r Jones recvng their share. As to my private Affairs with Mons^r Vigoe if M^r Mackintosh and M^r Jones cannot settle them Agreeable to my Wishes from any misunderstandings between them, you or me can do it I'm willing to Admit all Errors & Omissions that may have taken place to the prejudice to [of] M^r Vigoe on M^r Jones Admitting the like where in the last settlem^t I may be a looser from Omissions & I have Every reason to suppose this proposition is so consistent with honor & honesty that he can have no Objection. I hope & will Expect your Answer to Morrow Morning on the Subject of this Letter & dont loose this Letter as I have no Coppy of it.

I'm in great haste truly Yours

John Askin

Addressed: E. Brush Esquire at Detroit

Endorsed: Nov^r 5^h 1804 Jn^o Askin to E. Brush this Letter was Shown to M^r Jones Attorney for M^r Vigoe

DEBTS OF FRANCIS VIGO

Detroit 6 Nov^r 1804

Dear Sir Agreeable to your desire I waited on M^r Jones this morning and gave him the perusal of your letter. he then told me that your ideas of a Settlement between the miamis Comp^y and Vigo perfectly corresponded with what he and M^r W^m Mackintosh had agree^d on before they left the post and that nothing was wanting to effect that Settlement but the return of James Abbott but that he could wait no longer than to day for him but in case he did not come in this ev[e]ning he would leave with me those terms addressed to M^r Abbott and his advice for him to Settle the Business with the Comp^y conformable thereto but that he himself was not Authoresed [to] make any

Settlement of any kind. Relative to your individual Business with M^r Vigo he also observed that both before and after the [suit] had been commenced he proposed to M^r Mackintosh to Arbitrate the Business and told him he would Submit it to men of his own election but that he refus^d he says he is yet willing and desirous of Settling it this way but Seems inclined to hav[e] the arbitration at Vincennes where he Says you may elect the men Of this how[e]ver I will Speak to him again I think its but right the Arbitration Should be had here as the Business was transacted here. his whole defence I believe consists in the loss you have put on Vigo of what his peltries full Short of the estimated Sum of £1343 I think as you Showed me or thereabouts. Altho he and Mackintosh are by no means friends yet they will I believe do Business together.

In a distracted hurry I am Sir yours &

E Brush

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane

Endorsed: Nov^r 6^h 1804 E. Brush Esq^r to Jn^o Askin relative to Mons^r Vigoe recv^d same day

WRECK OF THE *SPEEDY*

Dear Sir 'Tis now some time since I had the Pleasure of Addressing you. I should be sorry however to Allow the last Vessel of the Season, to Sail with[out] carrying to you the offer of my best wishes, and best respects.

The late very heavy Misfortune that has befallen our Society, has filled us with much Greif, & has sent Mourning into every district of the Province. The *Speedy* as you probably have heard, left York to go to Newcastle, formerly the Presque Isle of the Bay Kenti [Quinte], with not less than 17 or 18 persons on Board.⁶⁸ Amongst these were the following, M^r Justice Cochrane, M^r Sol. Gen. Gray, Mess^{rs} Angus M^oDonnel Jacob Herkemer M^{rs} Hamiltons Brother [George] Cowan the Interpreter at Matchetas, with seven other Passengers.⁶⁹ She was seen off the Harbour of Presque

⁶⁸ The *Speedy* left York on October 7 and was wrecked on or soon after the night of Oct. 8, 1804. For a contemporary newspaper account of the disaster, see Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, 528-29.

⁶⁹ Thomas Cochrane was justice of the Court of King's Bench in Toronto. Macdonell

Isle on Monday the 8th Oct, in the Evening, & has not since been heard of. A very violent Storm prevailed on that Night & the following day, & there can be no doubt but that she foundered in it. Some small portion[s] of the Wreck have be[en] found on the South shore of this Lake, but nothing of much Consequence, nor any of the Dead Bodies.

Such Men as we have on this Occasion lost, will not soon be replaced; and it makes a sad Blank in the Society, particularly at York. The Absence of the Cheif Justice⁷⁰ also, who is gone this Season on a Visit to England, will render this more sincerely felt, And will most probably prevent much Bussiness of any kind, being done there this winter.

In other respects we have but little new here. A very wett Season has hindred much, the Sowing of wheat; And we fear the Crop of next Season, will be short in Proportion. Colds have prevailed very generally, but to other Intempers we are in general Strangers.

In the Article of public News, Your papers will shew you that the war in Europe has the Appearance of Bursting out with fresh Vigour. The Northern Powers seem determined to try again their Fortune against this Corsican Usurper, & surely the other Continental Powers will not supinely submit to his exorbitant Exactions, when they see a Prospect of being so well supported. All I fear for is, that these Combinations formed of such Various Materials, like the Idol mentioned in the Bible, with Arms of Brass, & feet of Clay, cannot support themselves long enough to be of use effectually. Still however the threatned Invasion is held out to employ & to agitate the Minds of our Country men; And this Buonoparte is such an extraordinary fellow, there is no saying What he may, or what he may not do. How fortunate are we in [illegible] detached Corner of the Globe, enjoying Peace in the greatest Plenty, and only listening to the Sound of the Storm, at such a distance.

M^{rs} Hamilton requests me of [to] make an offer of her best

was sheriff of York. Together with other officials they were proceeding to Newcastle for the purpose of trying Ogetonicut, a Chippewa Indian, for the murder of a trader, John Sharp, it having been determined that the spot where the offense was committed lay within the District of Newcastle. The culprit and practically all of the court officers were consigned to the same watery grave.

⁷⁰ Henry Allcock, for whom see *ante*, 260.

JOHN ASKIN PAPERS

respects to M^{rs} Askin, & best wishes for you & all yours,
Await you from me and all mine. I am D^r sir

Yours most Sincerly

R. Hamilton

Queenston Nov. 8, 1804

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esquire near Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Nov^r 8^h 1804 Rob^t Hamilton Esq^r
to Jn^o Askin recvd^d y^e 27^h & Answ^d y^e 28^h

CONDITION OF WINDMILL

Petit Cote, 8 Nov^r 1804

John Askin sen^r Esq^r

Dear Sir I duly rece^d yours of the 2^d Ins^t inclosing your order, on M^r Weaver for all the Utencils bellonging to the Wind Mill I went immediatly with it myself in order not to Rely upon the Report of a Messenger.

You may beleive, I was never so Surprized when I was deliver'd only the Stove, one of the Plates, broke, a Beam & a few weights, all of the quantity under 7^{ds} a wanting. I made the Necessary enquiries about all the other matters, but was told, that was all, he took into Care, and all he found in the Mill when You desired him to take charge of it.

Respecting the sails, he said that the Miller had cut them up & made Cloathes for His Children. Now there are yet wanting all the Hammers to pick the Stones, an Iron Crow Bar, for Raising the stones, the small Weights & many other Articles which assuredly is Comprehended in the Sale, a List of which I inclose. It is M^r Lapage who I suppose Should acco^t for them as he was the Last Possessor. I therefore hope you will make the Necessary enquiry, as he is about Melloches Mill oposite to your Place.

This Bad weather has prevented me from going to Sandwich and I am Anxious to Learn the fate of Vigo's Business. Are there nothing on foot, respecting the Peoples titles to Lands in & about Detroit, the Time is Very Nigh when the Door will be Shut.

I am Dear Sir Yours truly

William Park

P. S. I will want also your deed of sale for the for Acres of Land, Yet I would rather that you could Put it of to the Person whom you sold the adjoining Lot.

Endorsed: Petite Cote Nov^r 8^h 1804 from M^r Park Answ^d

PROPERTY OF NORTH WEST COMPANY

Montreal 8th Decem^r 1804

William Park }
John Askin } Esquires
Alex^r Harrow }

Gentlemen A Coalition being effected between the N. W. Companies,⁷¹ it becomes necessary that a valuation should be made of the *Nancy*, *Caledonia* and *Charlotte*, with their respective Rigging and Materials whether in use or spare. The Transfers will be made the 1st of April. The Parties interested have here jointly agreed, to nominate you to make the Valuations, and we hope that you will be good enough to undertake the Charge. Previous to your fixing said Valuations, it is meant that a Survey should be held upon each of the Vessels by three Carpenters, viz^t Mess^{rs} Connolly Bates and Nelson, and a Report made by them to you thereon. In confiding this business to you, we are satisfied that the object of the Interested will be attained, without favor affection or prejudice to either. There is a Store House, House, and Wharff belonging to the Owners of the *Nancy* of which we wish for a separate Valuation from the Vessel and her Materials, according to what you may think the fair present worth of said Houses and Wharff.

Excuse the Trouble we hereby give you, and believe us with much esteem Gentlemen

Your very Humble Servants

Frosyth Richardson & C^o

M^r Duff & Cap^t Mills will represent the Interested in the

⁷¹ Dissension among the partners of the North West Company had culminated, in 1795, in the withdrawal of certain of them and the promotion of a rival organization. Thenceforward until the death of Simon McTavish in July, 1804, competition was strenuous between the two groups of erstwhile associates. His death cleared the way for a reunion of the rivals, which was formally accomplished in Montreal on Nov. 5, 1804. See Davidson, *North West Company*, *passim*, especially 83 ff.

Nancy, and Mr Ja^s M^oIntosh those in the other Vessels.

Addressed: William Park Esq^r Sandwich

Endorsed: Letter F. Richardson & C^o Dec^r 8, 1804.
answ^d 2^d Feb^{ry} 1805 post Paid Respecting the N W C^o

CHARTER OF THE *SAGUINAH*

Niagara Dec^r 15^h 1804

John Askin Esq^r

Dear Sir I yesterday at this place received your letters of the 25th & 28^h Ult^o. I shall in the Course of the day See William Dickson on the business mentioned in your letter. it is not at all unusual for Cyder to come down in bad order. the working of the Vessels increases the fermentation of the Cyder, & very often not only lessens the Quantity but injures the Quality. Not being at home I cannot now Say how much I have Credited you with it will however Appear in Account Current It will I am afraid be a bad Spec, not a Barrel being yet Sold. With respect to the *Saguinah* I have to Make you an Offer which if you Accept let me hear from you by the very first Opportunity

I will give for the Charter of the *Saguinah* from Fort Erie to Mackina & back, with the allowance of Twenty One lay days, in all, Five Hundred Pounds New York Currency, payable at F. Erie on the first of October, the vessel to be at Fort Erie on the Twentieth of May, & to proceed with all dispatch So soon as loaded, for Mackina, & not to be detained on any Account, by the Owners or Captⁿ at Detroit. should she be detained by me beyond the 21 days, demurrage at the rate of Twenty Dollars P. day to be allowed I have been Offered the Charter of a vessel on terms Equal to these, but, wishing on all occasions where I Can with propriety do it to give you a preference I have declind accepting the Offer untill I hear from you.

I shall add what I have to Say in answer from William Dickson in a Postscript, & am in the Mean time with best Compliments & wishes to the Family Dear Sir

Your Friend & Faithful Serv^t

Rob^t Nichol

M^r Dickson has promised to write Per the Post

Addressed: John Askin Esq^r Strabane near Sandwich

Endorsed: Niagara Dec^r 15^h 1804 M^r Rob^t Nichol to
Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 3^d Jan^y 1805 Answ^d y^e 4^h & 10th

HARDSHIPS OF BALDOON SETTLERS

Dear Sir I have by this post your seperate favors of the 25th & 28th Ult^o, and it gave us sincere satisfaction to learn that you & yours were well. We thank God for the same Blessing conferred on us as with the exception of some slight Colds we have all enjoyed uninterrupted good health.

The reports we hear of the Melancholy condition of Lord Selkirks Settlers is distressing to humanity.⁷² The i[n]discreet Choice of a Situation so unpleasant so unhealthy seems completely of a peice with the other parts of the Speculation entered into with rashness & conducted without Consideration. It is said here that 20,000 £ have allready been expended. As much more may be thrown away with equal Success, for when is one Shilling to be expected back? Say that remuneration or Profit were only secondary Considerations with his Lordship, how much has Benevolence been Counteracted by the unfortunate Choice of the Situation. We have not heard a Word of his Lordship since he left us. Some hundred more Sheep & 10 or 12 Brood mares winter in this Vicinity, on their way upward.

In a Conversation with our freind Dickson who has lately been at York, I learn that he has procured a considerable portion of your deeds, which are now in the hands of his Brother Thomas D. for the payment of the fees, amounting to about forty pounds Pro Cur^y. I am very glad to understand that you have lodged money for the payment of this, as Dickson thinks his honor interested for the performance of his promise of punctual payment, And so scarce is Cash here, at this time, that was we all joining together, your freinds could hardly raise that sum among them. Dickson has I beleive done every thing in his power in your behalf.

⁷² The allusion is to Selkirk's Baldoon settlement at Wallaceburg on the St. Clair River, established in the summer of 1804. Forty-two of the original settlers (numbering about 110 in all) died during the first year. For an account of the settlement, see Kent Hist. Soc., *Papers and Addresses*, I, 13-21.

You yourself know the trouble & the vexation of Attending the public offices at York; this by some new regulations is very greatly encreased, And I would sooner undertake almost any other bussiness, than go thro the process, on my own Account, and how much worse for another, in whose Circumstances you are perhaps but ill informd, & of course must be often at a loss.

I have understood that a New Commission is intended this Session in Matters of Land, but how to operate I have not learnt. As far as my poor endeavours can go, it shall be extensive enough to meet the Cases you Mention, & I shall not fail to take your letter to York for the perusal of our freind Cartwright.

You will do as you think best about the lott of land you Mention. Fortunately the balance between us has not been very much wanted for some time past.

Of Public News we have very little this Season You will hear by Mr Williams who passed this a few days ago the Reports of New York. I did not see him in passing. We enjoy in common with you Peace & plenty. Our Wh[eat] Crops are I beleive nearly equal to those of last year; but the Demand from below has raised flour to 20/- and wheat to 6/ p^r bush. Pork is good, tho in less quantity than last year. I have now in my Cellar upwards of two hundred Hogs. We also made an forty Barrels of Cyder; & what I beleive you have not yet thought of, 250 Gallons peach Brandy from my own Orchard.

Mr^{rs} Hamilton joins me in best respects for Mr^{rs} Askin, & in best wishes for you & all your good family. I am Dear Sir

Yours very Sincerly

R. Hamilton

Queenston Dec^r 16, 1804.

John Askin Esq^r

Addressed: John Askin Esquire Merchant near Sandwich

Endorsed: Queenston Dec^r 16^h 1804 Mr Rob^t Hamilton
to Jn^o Askin recv^d y^e 4^h Jan^y 1805 Answ^d y^e 10th

SALE OF LAND AT SPRING WELLS

I do hereby Certify that in the Year One thousand seven hundred & ninety three as far as I can recollect I sold John Askin Sen^r a Certain Lot of Land at or near the spring Well below the Town of Detroit being two Acres in front by One hundred & twenty Deep, bounded in front by the Detroit river, in rear by unlocated Lands & on both sides by Land then belonging to the said John Askin Sen^r Which Tract of Land I purchased of Issidor Chesne,⁷³ Father in Law to Colonel Chabert & with the full Consent & approbation of the Latter. And as the said Jn^o Askin Sen^r has lost or mislaid the Deed of Sale for the said Lot or Tract, I now give this Certificate as evidence of the reallity & fairness of the transaction & will furnish further Proof if required.

In Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand & seal at Sandwich this thirty first day of December Anno Domini 1804.

Jn^o Askin J^r (L. S.)

Witness Charles Askin

Endorsed: Recorded in the Land Office at Detroit in Liber E folio 109. teste G^o Hoffman N^o 14 Voucher for Claim N^o 19 by John Askin

POTAWATOMI GRANT AT RAISIN RIVER

I do hereby certify that the Indian Chiefs of the Potawemie Nation gave & executed a certain Deed bearing date at the River au Resin on the second of June One thousand Seven hundred & Eighty eight for a certain Tract of Land containing Six Acres of Land in front on each side of the

⁷³ For the Chêne family of Detroit, see *B.H. R.*, I, 410. Isidore Chêne, one of the younger sons of Charles Chêne and Catherine Sauvage, was born in Detroit on Jan. 6, 1737, and was buried there on July 1, 1793. He was an interpreter in the Indian Department. On Nov. 28, 1758, he married Therese Becquet of Detroit, daughter of Pierre Becquet and Mary Geneveva Vanier. They had two children, one of whom died in childhood. The other, Mary Joseph Chêne, born Feb. 7, 1762, married on April 10, 1780, Francis de Joncaire de Chabert, whose career is noted *ante*, 113. Chêne was a member of Governor Hamilton's Vincennes expedition of 1778. At the time of Clark's appearance before Vincennes, he chanced to be outside the fort. He concealed himself in the adjoining forest during the battle, and on its termination, made his way to Detroit with the news of Hamilton's surrender. See Denissen, *op. cit.*, and *Ill. Hist. Colls.*, I, 424-26, and VIII, 281 and 308.

River Resin by One hundred in Depth bounded by Guemon Robert,⁷⁴ Reume⁷⁵ & others which will fully appear by the said Deed & I do further certify that Six Acres of said Land in front on the south side of the said River Resin, then were intended for Charles & James Askin & for them they were given tho the Deed was executed in my name & the other six Acres in front by one hundred in Depth on the North side of the said River Resin I gave them in exchange to John Askin Sen^r in or about the Year One thousand Seven hundred & Ninety One, for a Lot on the said River Resin formerly the property of Widow Martin. Should further Proof be required in order to make this transaction Clearer I will at any time hereafter give it.

In Witness whereof I have to these Present Set my Hand & Seal at Sandwich this thirty first day of December Anno Domini 1804.

Jn^o Askin J^r (L. S.)

Witness John Daine

Endorsed: Recorded Liber B. folio 311 G^o Hoffman R. J. A & C & J^o A A N^o 12 13

Evidence for Claim N^o 21 by John Askin

⁷⁴ For the Robert line of Detroit and Raisin River, see *ante*, 197-98. Probably the person alluded to here was Isidore Robert.

⁷⁵ Probably Jean Baptiste Réaume, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 170.